

CAR Busters

Nº8

Spring 2000

For a world without cars
Pour un monde sans voitures



CAR Bust-



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Just in Case You Didn't Know



Despite the usual customs hassles at the Czech border, we've made our move to Prague and—other than the 45-minute commute on public transport between affordable housing and affordable office space—things are really coming together here. Feel free to come visit when you're in the neighbourhood.

We had intended for issue #8 to focus on the importation of car culture into Eastern Europe, to lead up to the Towards Car-Free Cities II conference. Only, since nobody ever responds to e-mail messages that require a bit of thought, we can't get the information and do the necessary interviews until we get to the conference. So you'll hear about local experiences in Eastern Europe, positive and negative, next time. Instead, here we explore the past and future of Car-Free Days, matters of strategy surrounding them, and where to go from here: a proposal for a big hard-hitting and splashy World Car-Free Day for September 21. Interested in doing something locally for World Car-Free Day? Get in touch!

Speaking of the near future, the SUV—sport-utility vehicle, 4x4 or four-wheel-drive—has arrived in Europe, so now we feel an added sense of solidarity with anti-SUV North Americans. Article, page 24. Be sure to see Sam Tracy's vision on the future of the SUV—the first piece of fiction to ever grace our pages.

And just in case you didn't know, we don't sit around typing this up for our own pleasure. We can only provide you with this service if we have a two-way exchange with activists, campaigners, researchers, writers, artists and photographers. We always need news, photos, articles, action reports, help with distribution and especially subscriptions and prompt renewals... But if you're busy or can't, hey, we understand. Hope to hear from you soon!



Trotz der üblichen Nervereien an der tschechischen Grenze haben wir den Umzug nach Prag geschafft und ausser des 45minütigen Pendelns zwischen erschwänglichem Büro- und Wohnraum per öffentlichem Nahverkehr fängt alles an, ganz gut zu klappen. Ihr seid herzlich eingeladen, uns zu besuchen, wenn ihr gerade in der Gegend seid.

Stattdessen untersuchen wir hier die Vergangenheit und Zukunft der autofreien Tage, die Strategien um sie herum, und ihre Entwicklungsmöglichkeiten: ein Vorschlag für einen grossen, schlagkräftigen weltweiten autofreien Tag am 21. September. Interessiert, lokal dafür etwas auf die Beine zu stellen? Kontaktiert uns!

Wo wir schon bei der nahem Zukunft sind, die sogenannten SUVs - sport-utility vehicles, eine Art Landrover mit Vierradantrieb - sind in Europa angekommen, und so sind wir nun solidarischer mit Anti-SUV-Leuten in Nordamerika. Artikel siehe S.24. Schaut euch Sam Tracy's Vision der Zukunft der SUVs an - das erste Stück Prosaliteratur auf unseren Seiten. Und, falls ihr es noch nicht bemerkt haben solltet, wir schreiben diese Zeitschrift nicht zu unserem eigenen Vergnügen. Wir können euch diesen Service nur bieten wenn ein gegenseitiger Austausch mit AktivistInnen, ForscherInnen, AutorInnen, KünstlerInnen und Fotografinnen stattfindet. Wir brauchen stets Neuigkeiten, Fotos, Artikel, Aktionsreportagen und Hilfe beim Vertrieb. Besonders Abos und Erneuerungen derselben...Hoffentlich bis bald!



A pesar de los típicos problemas en la frontera Checa, hemos hecho ya la mudanza a Praga, y aparte de los 45 minutos de transporte público entre la zona de vivienda asequible y la zona de oficina asequible, las cosas comienzan a marchar ya. Estáis invitados a pasaros por el local cuando vengais por aquí.

Aquí exploramos el pasado y el futuro de los Días Sin Coches, los asuntos de estrategia alrededor de dichos días y hacia donde tirar: una propuesta para un Día Mundial Sin Coches cañero el próximo 21 de Septiembre. ¿Estás interesado/a en hacer algo localmente para el Día Mundial Sin Coches? ¡Ponte en contacto! Hablando del futuro inmediato, los todoterreno, 4x4 o vehículos con tracción a las cuatro ruedas han llegado a Europa, por lo que experimentamos un reforzado sentimiento de solidaridad con el movimiento anti 4x4 en América. Artículo, página 24. Asegúrate de ver la visión de Sam Tracy sobre el futuro de los 4x4, la primera imagen de ficción que se asoma a nuestras páginas.

Y por si no lo sabías, no nos dedicamos a teclear esto para pasar el rato. Solo podemos prestar este servicio si tenemos un intercambio en dos direcciones con activistas, investigadores, escritores, artistas y fotógrafos. Siempre necesitamos noticias, fotos, artículos, reportajes de acciones y ayuda en la distribución. Especialmente suscripciones renovaciones Esperamos saber de ti pronto!

La traduction française est fournie dans un supplement inséré dans tous les magazines destinés aux pays francophones. Contactez Car Busters si vous voulez le recevoir dans un pays non-francophone.

Bust-

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the opinion of Car Busters or its editors,
although it's pretty damn likely.



Feeling alone with your opinion? Tired of reading things written only by Canadians? Send a letter under 300 words, and we just might inflict it on all our readers.



photo: Christian Boulais

Traffic calming, Groningen, The Netherlands. See letter and diagram.

Traffic Calming Isn't So Bad

John Whitelegg is not at all wrong to be disappointed with traffic calming. But we can't ask traffic calming to be what it is not.

I campaign for traffic calming in Montreal with the group Rues Pour Tous. To go further than the limited experience of my city, I spent August 1999 in the Netherlands, where traffic calming is implemented on the scale of entire neighbourhoods in most cities.

As a pedestrian and cyclist I found that being with cars in 30 km/h zones was far less stressful than the streets that I am used to. The fact is that drivers can't go fast. Then they respect the vulnerable users of the street.

The best examples of redesigned streets—"calmed" streets (maximum 30 km/h) and "living yard" streets ("woonerf" in Dutch; maximum 10 km/h)—are very beautiful. Residents said they were happy to live there. But in the 30 km/h zones—often featuring only speed bumps—parents would prefer to live in "woonerf" for their children, because the additional car restraint makes them safer.

However, I've been disappointed to see that about half of drivers do not choose to drive in a "calmed" way. Instead of driving slowly but consistently, they drive aggressively, going fast between traffic calming devices, although not too fast, and slowing down only because of obstacles in the street.

I went back from the Netherlands with those conclusions. Traffic calming seems efficient to adapt the car to the city. The re-designing of streets permits us to take space from the car to a more social and aesthetic purpose. This new design gives people an idea of what a car-free city could be like. Traffic calming favours the bicycle and improves safety for all street users. I am more convinced than ever that traffic calming must be a part of a sustainable transport plan that looks to adapt the car to the city but also to reduce car use and the public space devoted to it. For our fellow citizens who are not able to see life without cars, I believe that traffic calming can introduce the idea of a choice between car

and city. When citizens are disappointed by traffic calming because it does not resolve the problem, we get nearer to our goal, don't you think?

Christian Boulais
Montreal, Canada

Rethinking the Fax Jam

In Car Busters #7 there was an interesting article on electronic civil disobedience. It explained how to make a fax jam, in which a jammer attempts to make someone's fax machine print out pages of garbage.

For those of us who don't have a fax modem, there is a simpler and even more gleeful way to jam a fax machine. All you need is a manual feed fax machine that pulls the sheets through in a single queue. Most older machines operate this way.

Send a queue of three or four sheets into the fax machine. Remember, bold and small fonts are your friends. As soon as the first sheet comes out of the other end, attach it to the last sheet before it is pulled into the machine. This forms a paper loop that will feed indefinitely, and as an added bonus it will use up toner on the receiving fax machine, which is far more annoying to them than the waste of paper.

Jon Dunbar
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

No Longer Alone

The other day I was in the Good Earth store (a store attempting to be environmentally friendly). I was looking for interesting

magazines when I came across Car Busters. I enjoyed the artwork and the articles that I read that I actually bought the magazine.

Who am I? I am sort of an oddity. I have lived for 29 years on this planet and still I do not own a car.

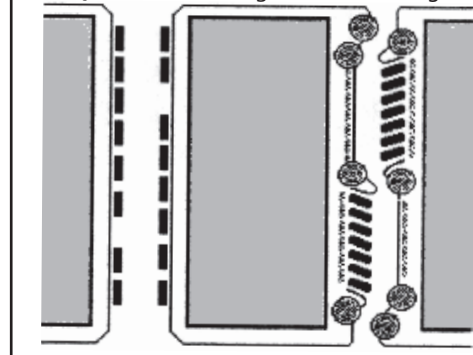
My dad is still trying to figure out his son and where he went wrong. He has offered to sell his son his old car so that he can buy a new one. His son says no.

A car leads to better jobs, says the father. The son retorts, yes, but also to ecological damage and higher bills. It makes little sense to increase one's bills when one currently cannot pay them. The father says, well, we can come to an arrangement. The son says, I think you are missing the point. The point is, says the son, I do not need a car. The father scratches his head and then explains how helpful cars are. There are none so blind as those who refuse to see, thinks the son. The son buys a "one less car" sticker and places it on his old guitar case. He explains to his friends that if he got a car that he would have to get rid of the sticker and he really likes the sticker. His friends laugh and they continue to drink their coffee. His father still shakes his head and looks to find his son a car.

My friends and sometimes strangers can understand my disinterest in owning a car, but my family seems concerned about my inability to conform to the current accepted standard.

I think one of the most important things a person or group can do is publish their thoughts. These thoughts may seem trivial or pointless, but they let others know that other people have the same problems and struggles as they do. Then the movement or revolution begins. People realise they are not alone. The few soon become the many. Thus begins the revolution or the new way of looking at life and the world. I wanted to thank you for begging the thought that we, the anti-car movement, are not alone.

Ian Kaszuba
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada



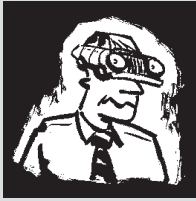
Traffic Calming: An Example

At left, a street adapted for the car. A one-way street, with parallel parking, designed for maximum car speeds. Note the linear line of sight and lack of obstacles.

At right, the same street adapted for all road users. On the corners, the pavements (sidewalks) facilitate pedestrian crossing while slowing down car traffic. The angled parking breaks up the linear design. The lane width is reduced to 3.25 metres. All this makes drivers drive slower and respect other road users.

"Gasoline is here to stay, in the short-term."

- Darrel Bunge, president, Minnesota Petroleum Council



CAR CULT REVIEW

Ford's CEO Tells the Future

"I believe fuel-cell vehicles will finally end the 100-year reign of the internal combustion engine. It's going to be a winning situation all around—consumers will get an efficient power source, communities will get zero emissions, and automakers will get another major business opportunity—a growth opportunity..."

"In the 20th century, the automobile industry gave the average person the freedom of mobility, and undreamed of prosperity. We made enormous amounts of money for our shareholders. We led the Industrial Revolution that created modern life. Those are incredible accomplishments—but why stop there?...we can have an even greater impact on the 21st century. We should set our sights high. Let's give people better cars, and better trucks—and a better world!"

- Ford Chairman William Clay Ford, Jr., in a speech at the Automotive News World Congress in Detroit, USA.

April Means Commuter Poetry

All of Volkswagen's new cars shipped during last April's national poetry month—an estimated 40,000—were equipped with a poetry book as a standard feature.

The year before, tollbooth operators passed along 500 free copies of Whitman's "Leaves of Grass" to motorists crossing the Walt Whitman Bridge in Camden, New Jersey, USA. [What will this April have in store? Copies of "Paradise Lost" to make the snail crawl through our cities all the more bearable? - ed.]

- The New Yorker Magazine

Man Kills Policeman to Avoid Traffic Penalty

A German who killed a traffic policeman said the killing was a bid to avoid more penalty points on his licence. He was caught speeding, which could have led to his licence being revoked. The attack happened in January on a highway 60 miles northeast of Frankfurt after the policeman used a radar gun to record the speed of the attacker's vehicle. The driver stopped, approached the police car on foot and fired once, hitting the 41-year-old father of two in the chest and killing him instantly. The radar measurement showed the attacker's vehicle to be travelling at 80 miles per hour in a 63 mph zone.

- Reuters, via Pednet listserve

Eve—and car designers are playing to the fact that as car buyers, we've got lampshades on our heads, champagne on our lips, love on our minds, and money in our pockets. We want to be wowed by the latest technology, but we want it packaged with a familiarity that makes us smile.

"With supercheap gas prices, the stock market's seven-year run, and consolidation in the automotive industry forcing prices down and quality up, we're in the mood to go for a little extra luxury. It's clear, in fact, that we're in nothing less than another golden era for cars—from technology and materials to value and choice..."

"The January Detroit motor show was a showcase for fin de millenaire excess that went well beyond the show cars. Ford is said to have spent over \$30 million on its 94,600-square-foot, two-story display stand, with a dramatic wood and steel staircase, restaurant, and amphitheater. BMW hired buff Lycra-clad dancers and Rollerbladers to put on an hourly extravaganza worthy of Broadway. And Subaru imported an entire living forest—trees, rocks, running water—to remind us where its vehicles can transport us. (The only thing missing was a swarm of mosquitoes)..."

"Whether or not the Dow stays buoyant, the manufacturers have caught the glint of passion in buyers' eyes. They know we're bored with practical econoboxes, and they understand that now we're willing to spend on luxury details—extra leather, navigation systems, clean-running higher-horsepower engines. Consolidation will put pressure on prices that will make all these quixotic forms of transportation available to a larger audience.

"No one is sure what the new millennium will bring, but whatever it is, we can count on one thing: being able to jump in our vehicles, hit the open road, and, like good Americans, get away from it all."

- Fortune Magazine, Feb 15, 1999

On the Road to Fitness

"Turn your Traffic Time into Workout Time! Do you want to be in better shape? Sure, everybody does, but a lot of folks can't find the time for a health club...If you are one of those people...Traffic Workout is your answer.

"This easy-to-use, effective workout program is guaranteed to make your tummy toned and your biceps buffed in no time flat. There's simply no need for cumbersome free-weights or trips to the gym because Traffic Workout provides you with effective resistance exercises in the comfort of your car!

"You can tone up and trim down while you are in traffic by simply listening to the tape and following the guided routine with Traffic Workout's personal trainer. Look great and feel even better as you keep up with your winning lifestyle with Traffic Workout! Order Today!"

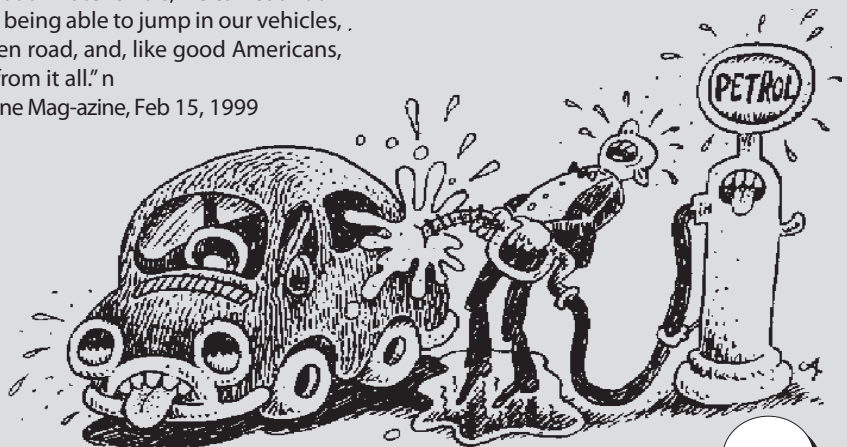
Janice from Houston wrote: "I work only three minutes away from my house, but when I am doing my Traffic Workout, I drive a few extra blocks to complete the program. I would've never thought that I'd look forward to spending more time in my car!" Tony added: "I couldn't believe how quickly time passed while I was doing my Traffic Workout. What seemed like an eternal drive is now what I look forward to every day...Thanks for a great product!" And Pauline added: "I am hooked on this workout!"

- Advert from www.trafficworkout.com

How Much?!

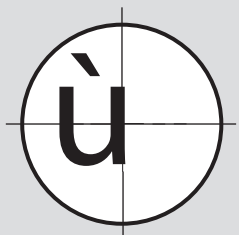
For all those "Great Gas Out" (see Car Cult Review, issue #7) supporters who think a gallon of gasoline is expensive at \$2, take a look at a few things Autoweek brought to the public's attention to compare:

Lipton iced tea	\$9.52/g
Gatorade sports drink	\$10.17/g
STP brake fluid	\$33.60/g
Scope mouthwash	\$84.84/g
Vick's Nyquil medicine	\$178.13/g
White Out correction fluid	\$254.17/g
and this is the real kicker...Evian water: \$21.19 a gallon...\$21.19 for water! So next time you're at the pump, be glad your car doesn't run on White Out! n	



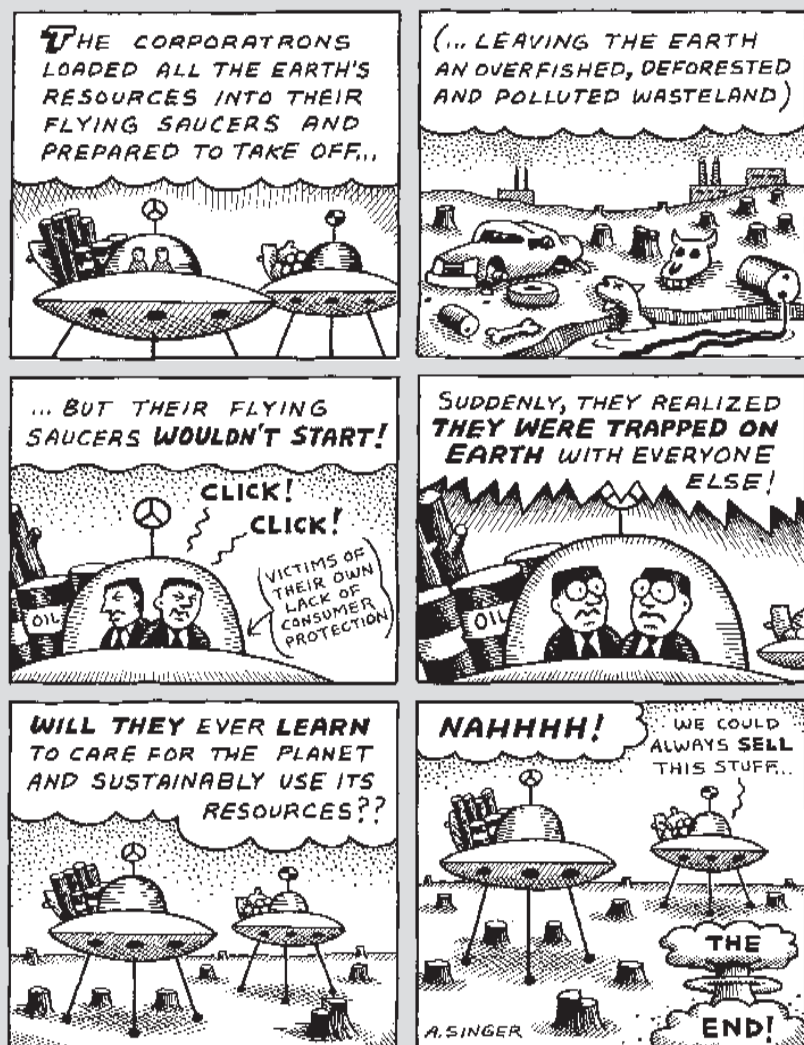
Lampshades on Their Heads

"This year is the equivalent of New Year's



Industry Watch

Digging the dirt on your favourite corporations.



Texaco

Texaco has become the first major U.S. oil company to announce it will leave the Global Climate Coalition—the industry lobbying group that has spent millions of dollars to convince the public that global warming is not a threat.

The lobby has prevented the U.S. Congress from taking constructive action, by handing out \$63 million in political contributions over the last ten years.

Texaco's announcement comes after years of dialogue with religious shareholders who urged the company to take a more "responsible" stance on global warming.

Other recent departures from the lobby include Daimler Chrysler and Ford, which said that membership was "something of an impediment to pursuing our environmental initiative in a credible way."

"Remaining corporations such as Exxon-Mobil, Chevron, and General Motors will clearly face growing public pressure as it becomes harder to justify spending corporate money on a coalition that fights efforts to stop global warming," said Christopher Ball, director of outreach for Ozone Action. "It seems like lying about global warming has finally fallen out of fashion in corporate America."

- Climate Action Now!

Larry Boweto is one of 122 youth who occupied the Parabe oil platform of San Francisco-based Chevron oil company on May 28, 1998, off the coast of Nigeria. There he was shot by soldiers who reportedly arrived shooting wildly out of Chevron helicopters (see Car Busters #3). Nearly two years later, he addresses this testimony to all who will listen:

When I was shot by Chevron on the Parabe platform, I was left for dead in a pool of my blood. I was unconscious for hours until two Chevron nurses came and took me to Escravos for treatment. From there I was taken to Eku Baptist Hospital. I was there for a month and few weeks. Chevron only visited me once. After that visit, they told the hospital officials to declare that I was dead.

Chevron also announced that "the youth taken to Eku hospital had died." I got this information from sources in the hospital and decided to leave before I was killed by Chevron. Before this announcement, Chevron was paying my bill but immediately afterward, they stopped paying and instructed the hospital not to give me a doctor's report.

I want to use this avenue to tell the world I am still alive

although I am more or less dead since my body does not function properly. I have not been able to work. I can't stand up for [more than] 30 minutes because of the injuries I sustained on my buttocks. The pain is so severe I don't know what to do. My hand is almost paralysed. I can't do anything with the hand presently. But I still believe that with some help I will regain my health.

Right now I am koboless [penniless]. It has been difficult to feed my family. My children are all schooling and I can't afford to pay their school fees anymore. I have cried and cried, but help seems to come from nowhere. I wonder how my wife will survive in her present condition. She is seven months pregnant now. I pray she will deliver safely. But after delivery I don't know how I will get the resources to take care of her. I want to use this medium to appeal to every concerned person to come to my aid.

I can't see my family suffer. All I need is proper treatment and I will be able to work again and fend for my family. n

If you wish to help, contact Environmental Rights Action, 214 Uselu Lagos Road, P.O. Box 10577, Benin City, Nigeria; e-mail: <eration@infoweb.abs.net>.

The House of Butterflies:

Is there a prosecutor in America with the guts to take on the oil and auto companies?

If you are one such prosecuting attorney, and you are reading this, go out and buy the March 20 issue of *The Nation* magazine. Rip out the 30-page investigative article titled "The Secret History of Lead," by Jamie Lincoln Kitman, drop in your standard indictment form, and then run down to the courthouse and file it. That will be the easy part. The companies will then hire the best white-collar-crime law firms in the business and come after you with all of their resources to defeat the indictment.

But reckless endangerment is reckless endangerment. And the people need a chance to bring justice to those who perpetrated this atrocity. It will be worth your while. Given the publicity this case will generate, you might even be elected to higher office. (For precedents, see Rudolph Giuliani, former white-collar crime busting U.S. Attorney, who went on to be mayor of New York, and William Weld, former Assistant Attorney General who later became governor of Massachusetts.)

Kitman's article is about how the makers of leaded gasoline—duPont, General Motors, Standard Oil of New Jersey (now Exxon-Mobil), and Ethyl Corporation (which started out as a joint venture between GM and Standard Oil)—systematically suppressed information about the severe health hazards of their product for decades.

These companies knew from the mid-1920s that leaded gasoline was a public health menace, yet they went ahead and put lead in gasoline anyway, to prevent engine knocking. This despite the fact that safe anti-knock substitutes were cheaply available. But the companies rejected them because they would be unprofitable.

From the 1920s until 1986, when leaded gas was finally banned from the U.S. market, lead was spewing from tailpipes, where it entered the bloodstream of humans. In children, lead lowers IQs, and increases learning disabilities, hyperactivity and behavioral problems. In adults, elevated lead levels are related to blood pressure increases, cardiovascular disease and heart attacks.

Lead expert Dr. Paul Mushak, in a 1988 report to Congress, estimated that 68 million children had toxic exposures to lead from gasoline from 1927 to 1987. A 1985 EPA study estimated that as many as 5,000 Americans were dying annually from lead-related heart disease before the lead phase-out in the United

States.

Lead was identified as a hazard thousands of years ago. It was not as if executives at GM and duPont and Standard Oil and Ethyl didn't know what the hazards were. In fact, those who worked with lead immediately became sick. Kitman estimates that dozens of workers died from lead poisoning. Workers knew that going crazy was an early sign of lead poisoning. Standard Oil's Bayway facility in Elizabeth, New Jersey was known in the 1920s as "The House of Butterflies," because, as Kitman told us, in some cases "when you are experiencing acute lead intoxication, you start hallucinating, and believing that you are being attacked by winged insects."

Workers going crazy and dying created a public relations nightmare in the 1920s. The papers picked up on it, and citizens began believing that they were being poisoned by the lead coming out of their tailpipes.

To save their deadly enterprise, in 1924, the corporations pulled lead off the market and asked the Surgeon General to hold a hearing, which he did in May 1925, to consider what one public health expert called "the single most important question in the field of public health that has ever faced the American public."

The hearing lasted six hours and 45 minutes. The Surgeon General concluded that the question couldn't be definitively answered and recommended that a committee of experts be set up. The committee was duly set up and reported back some months later that a.) leaded gasoline can be manufactured safely, and b.) they couldn't verify whether leaded gasoline would or would not result in injury in the short time they had to investigate.

So, this placates the public, and lead gets back into gasoline for another 40 years. Until the public became concerned about air pollution—smog—and the car companies built catalytic converters. Lead had this wonderful way of destroying the catalytic converter—so one or the other had to go—and finally, lead met its match.

We called the Lead Industries Association to ask about Kitman's article. They refused to respond. Then we called Ethyl Corp., which is still selling tetraethyl lead as a gasoline additive for sale all around the world, except in the U.S. and Europe.

Lloyd Osgood, an Ethyl Corp. spokesperson, was kind enough to read us a statement. She called Kitman's piece "a distorted interpretation of known historic events and documents that have



Lead was identified as a hazard thousands of years ago. It was not as if executives at GM and duPont and Standard Oil and Ethyl didn't know...

long been in the public record."

"The spin is extremely negative and biased and is not justified by the facts," she said. "Ethyl Corp. has always been and continues to be a responsible corporate citizen and the allegations to the contrary in this article are unfounded."

But Osgood refused to specify how the article distorted "known historic events." She even refused to answer simple questions like: "Is lead dangerous?"

For years, the lead industry denied that lead in gasoline was making its way into human bloodstreams. If that's so, why did human blood lead levels drop off dramatically in North America after 1986 when lead was banned from gasoline? Is there a prosecutor in the house? n

- Russell Mokhiber
and Robert Weissman

Mokhiber and Weissman are co-authors of "Corporate Predators: The Hunt for MegaProfits and the Attack on Democracy" (Monroe, Maine: Common Courage Press, 1999, <www.corporate-predators.org>).

This article appeared in Focus on the Corporation, a weekly column distributed on the e-mail listserve <corp-focus@lists.essential.org>. To subscribe, send an e-mail to <corp-focus-request@lists.essential.org> with the text: "subscribe."

THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE OF

What began as a spontaneous community action, has become a weakened tool of bureaucrats. How do government initiatives differ from our ideal Car-Free Day?

The concept of a Car-Free Day was not born in one day. Nor in one place.

It's hard to say exactly when the car-free movement began. Protest was widespread and popular from about 1900, but then it subsided by the mid-1920s. In the 1950s in the United States, people began organising against the Interstate Highway System. Two decades later, Car-Free Days developed and spread. Today we have a movement which is taking off, as Car-Free Days are adopted by government ministries and council chambers to further their environmental agendas.

However, with bureaucrats suddenly at the helm, it makes it even more important that we retain site of the true origins of the impulse for change—the streets—and the radical and citizen-led element behind the earliest car-free actions. And if World Car-Free Day on September 21 is to be a success, we must examine, critique and learn from current government-led Car-Free Day projects.

The E.U. Car-Free Day

The European "In Town, Without My Car!" day will be held September 22, with the themes of "urban mobility, pollution reduction, noise abatement and

the future of our towns."

All European towns are invited to take part, organising their own Car-Free Days based on the suggestions of the E.U. They must reserve an area of town for the exclusive use of "pedestrians, bikes, clean vehicles...and, especially, public transport" and ensure extra public transport is available on the day.

The E.U. encourages partner towns to use the day to test new measures of urban mobility such as "delivery systems using clean vehicles, a new route of public transport, car-sharing in companies, [and] bike parking areas with supervision." And they suggest that "events and public consultations organised around themes related to the environment, urban transport and the future of cities could also complete the plan of action." But, this are not obligatory.

Comment:

The European Car-Free Day will take place on a Friday. So, many commuters will simply take a long weekend rather than face the "horrors" of using alternative transport. The E.U. has chosen this date, building upon September 22, 1999, when over 150 French and Italian towns simultaneously held Car-Free Days. But as this year will be the first truly European Car-Free Day, it would be much stronger and more effective if it took place on a weekday, in order to confront commuter habits.

As it is, commuters will learn little, nor be taught much, if educational programmes around sustainability are to be only optional extras.

The day will only close off designated areas of cities, not

entire cities as in Bogotá. And so-called "clean vehicles"—electric cars or those running on liquefied petroleum or natural gas—are allowed into these areas. Which turns the E.U. Car-Free Day into a weak anti-pollution publicity stunt, not a serious effort to teach us what our cities could be like if we reclaimed the streets for people, not cars.

The E.U. even suggests that cities could use this day to test such radical programmes as "car sharing in companies." Are they then willing to compromise the initiative so far as to allow polluting internal combustion engine cars into their "car-free" zone as long as they have several occupants?

It seems to me that there is no concerted effort taking place to get people to explore truly alternative transport even for one day—let alone give up their cars. Sure, govern-

ments must take a less radical position than we might like, but if the Car-Free Day is supposed to teach us the potential of a car-free city, then isn't compromise to the point of car-sharing going too far?

However, being eternally optimistic, I have to point out that every cloud has a silver lining...and there may be a bright side to the European Car-Free Day. It will, after all, be Europe-wide. And, as it is organised by people with influence, power and resources, it should get a lot of press coverage. Which means that, just maybe, it will reach into a few homes that otherwise would be hard to reach and make a wider audience attentive to more radical Car-Free Day proposi-

DEBBIE WATERS

tions in the future. Well, I hope so anyway.

Italy's Ecological Sundays

On February 6, nearly 150 Italian towns and cities took part in the first Italian Car-Free Day, called Ecological Sunday, to be repeated once a month until May 7.

The aim is to reduce pollution and introduce the idea of "sustainable mobility." But each day has an additional theme: the first was dedicated to culture (February 6), the second to sport (March 5), the third will be to children (April 9) and the fourth to music (May 7). The success of the first Ecological Sunday led to extra towns joining in and the expansion of car-free zones for the second day.

The days are organised locally, so vary from town to town—some towns are banning cars and non-electric scooters in all their territory, some only in the centre, some only for a few hours, some all day. Taxis and public transport do operate, and in some towns public transport has been free. In Rome and other cities, parking on the edge of the no-car zone was also free, as was entry to museums and archaeological sites.

Comment: Italians undoubtedly enjoy the days—8 out of 10 would like to see them happen weekly. But, out of these people, only 5.8 percent declared they should happen mid-week. A further 30 percent supported the idea of car-free days taking place more than once a week, which the surveying team interpreted as signifying Sundays and "during working days." Optimistic, perhaps.

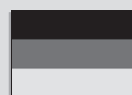
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SOME KEY MOMENTS OF THE CAR-FREE MOVEMENT 1950-2000

TRANSLATION

Traduction • Traducción • Übersetzung

- n **1950s, USA.** Protests spring up across America around the construction of the Interstate Highway System. In New York City a citizens' group publically demonstrated against, and succeeded in stopping, a proposal to run Fifth Avenue through the middle of Washington Square Park.
- n **Autumn, 1968, Groningen, the Netherlands.** The first neighborhood "woonerf," an entirely illegal project led by local residents aiming to create a safe space for people.
- n **1972, Delft, the Netherlands.** The first official Woonerf opened.
- n **January-February 1974, Switzerland.** Four Car-Free Sundays organised during the "Oil Crisis."
- n **1981, East Germany (DDR).** First German Car-Free Day.
- n **September 1991, New York, USA.** "First International Conference on Auto-Free Cities," organised by Transportation Alternatives.
- n **September 1992, San Francisco, USA.** The first Critical Mass, anarchistically organised, aiming to take back the streets from cars.
- n **September 1993 to November 1994, East London.** Construction of the M11 Link Road meets full-on resistance of environmental activists and local people, who occupy buildings to be razed.
- n **March 1994, Amsterdam, the Netherlands.** "Car-Free Cities Network" launched by The European Union DG XI and Eurocities.
- n **May 14, 1995, London, U.K.** First Reclaim The Streets action in Camdentown, North London. Anarchistic, spontaneous party takes over the streets, for a while.
- n **Summer 1995, Arcata, California, USA.** *Paving Moratorium Update* becomes *Auto-Free Times*, international circulation 12,000.
- n **May 8, 1996.** "Copenhagen Declaration" issued by international meeting of European government groups.
- n **June 1996, Reykjavik, Iceland.** Iceland's first Car-Free Day organised by local government for the capital city.
- n **June 11, 1996, Bath, U.K.** The first British Car-Free Day.
- n **1997, U.K.** First of three annual National Car-Free Days.
- n **September 9, 1997, La Rochelle, France.** "Journée sans voiture." France's first real Car-Free Day.
- n **October 26 to November 1, 1997, Lyon, France.** "Towards Car-Free Cities" international activist conference organised by European Youth for Action and others. Car Busters is born.
- n **June 21, 1998, Germany.** "Mobil Ohne Auto" Germany-wide Car-Free Mobility Day.
- n **September 22, 1998, France.** French Ministry of Regional Planning and the Environment and 34 French cities organise "En ville, sans ma voiture!"
- n **September 19, 1999, the Netherlands.** First National Car-Free Sunday in the Netherlands.
- n **September 22, 1999, France.** "En ville, sans ma voiture!" second annual event.
- n **September 22, 1999, Rome.** "In città senza mia auto," Italian National Car-Free Day.
- n **September 26, 1999, Belgium.** The first Belgian Car-Free Day is announced.
- n **February 6, 2000, Italy.** The first of four successive Car-Free Sundays in Italy, to occur the first Sunday of every month until May 7.
- n **February 24, 2000, Colombia.** "Sin mi carro en Bogotá." The world's first city-wide, mid-week, Car-Free Day.
- n **April 23, 2000, Indonesia.** Car-Free Day arranged as part of Earth Day 2000 celebrations in Jakarta.

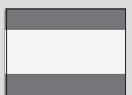


Um unseren weltweiten autofreien Tag einen Erfolg werden zu lassen, müssen wir die gegenwärtigen Massnahmen untersuchen und sehen, wie diese verändert oder radikalisiert werden sollten.

Der europäische autofreie Tag verbannt Autos nur von bestimmten Zonen, lässt "saubere" Autos in diese Gebiete und besteht nicht auf einer ökologischen Bildungskampagne, welche mit dem Tag einhergeht. Ein autofreier Lebensstil wird den Menschen hier nicht nähergebracht.

Bei den italienischen ökologischen Sonntagen, welche einmal im Monat vom 6. Februar bis zum 7. Mai gehalten werden, gibt es von Stadt zu Stadt Unterschiede. Wir sehen die italienischen Bemühungen als positiv an wegen ihres regelmässigen Erscheinens, kritisieren allerdings die Tatsache, dass alle autofreien Tage Sonntage sind und somit die Pendler nicht ansprechen, und ausserdem eine recht festliche Atmosphäre haben. Massnahmen wie kostenloses Parken am Stadtrand ermuntern den Gebrauch des Autos. Wir warten auf Entwicklungen, um zu sehen, ob das italienische Experiment tatsächlich das Thema des Lebens ohne Auto ansprechen wird.

Der autofreie Tag in Bogota war der allererste stadtweite autofreie Tag, welcher mitten in der Woche stattfand. Bogota musste viele Probleme überwinden, um den Tag zu organisieren - die Busse sind kein Stadteigentum und von Kriminalität geplagt, es gibt keine U-Bahn, und das Land befindet sich gerade in einer wirtschaftlichen Rezession. Doch es wurde ein Erfolg. Einige Fehler gab es zwar, doch man kann sich kaum beschweren, wenn das Experiment in Bogota bewies, dass jede Stadt in der Lage sein sollte, einen mittwöchentlichen autofreien Tag abzuhalten, wenn sie es wirklich wollen. n



Para que nuestro Día Mundial Sin Coches sea un éxito debemos examinar las medidas actuales y ver cómo cambiarlas y radicalizarlas. El Día Europeo Sin Coches sólo prohíbe los coches en zonas designadas, permite la entrada de coches "limpios" en

dichas áreas y no insiste en realizar educación ambiental ese día. Carece de determinación para educar a la gente sobre formas de vida sin coches.

Los "Domingos Ecológicos" italianos, que se celebran una vez al mes del 6 de Febrero al 7 de mayo, varían de una localidad a otra. Vemos la iniciativa italiana positivamente por que se realiza con regularidad, pero criticamos el hecho de que los Días Sin Coches se celebren siempre en Domingo, con lo que adquieren un aire festivo y no enfrentan el problema del tráfico en los días laborables. Medidas como el aparcamiento gratuito en los bordes de las zonas restringidas al tráfico fomentan el uso del coche. Estamos atentos para ver si el experimento italiano comienza de verdad a confrontar los aspectos relevantes de la vida sin coches.

El Día Sin Coches en Bogotá fue el primer Día Sin Coches celebrado entre semana y que englobaba la ciudad entera. Bogotá tuvo muchos problemas para organizar el evento, puesto que los autobuses no son municipales y tienen muchos problemas de criminalidad, la ciudad no tiene metro, y el país está inmerso en un conflicto civil y una grave recesión. Sin embargo la iniciativa tuvo éxito. Hubo algunos fallos, pero es difícil quejarse cuando el experimento de Bogotá ha demostrado que cualquier ciudad puede organizar un Día Sin Coches entre semana si realmente hay voluntad. n

La traduction française est fournie dans un supplément inséré dans tous les magazines destinés aux pays francophones. Contactez Car Busters si vous voulez le recevoir dans un pays non-francophone.

Adapted from the Ecoplan web site.



Especially as, when asked what the advantages of an Ecological Sunday are, the most common answers were “the possibility to walk freely without the presence of cars” and “the reduction of atmospheric pollution”—not the ability to see how effective and comfortable travelling by alternative transport can be without traffic congestion.

The Ecological Sundays have allowed Italians to view their cities in a new light and enjoy the urban environment. Actions such as free entry to museums in Rome have encouraged enjoyment. But, at the same time, they have contributed to the perception of the Car-Free Day as a festive weekend affair—not a serious message to go car-free.

The provision of free car parking on the edge of the car-free zone is the most damning, as it encourages people to drive to the edge of the zone, walk in and enjoy the pleasures of the car-free city! How ironic. Should I laugh or cry?

The Ecological Sundays are repeated each month, which encourages some long-term perception of car-free cities. But they will only achieve the level of impact required to make individual people give up their cars if they start to take place on a weekday and confront people's fears about commuting. As it stands, Italy's Ecological Sundays cannot be called a success when so little thought seems to have resulted about alternative transport or sustainable cities.

Bogotá's Car-Free Day

On Thursday February 24, Bogotá became perhaps the first city in the Global South to hold a Car-Free Day.

Bogotá, a city of 6.4 million people,

faces a major problem from increasing traffic, with about 70,000 additional cars appearing on the roads every year. It is the fifth most polluted city in Latin America.

Bogotá's mayor, Enrique Peñalosa, has consistently attacked traffic problems since he took office two years ago: he imposed a license-plate restriction that barred Bogotáños from driving to work twice a week during rush hour, he prohibited parking on a main shopping avenue, and he is planning to finish construction of 187.5 miles of permanent bike paths by the end of this year. He also plans to construct an 18.3-mile metro line (funding forthcoming)

and introduce a new satellite-monitored bus system capable of carrying 600,000 passengers a day.

Bogotá has some advantages over other cities for holding a Car-Free Day. The city is about six times more densely populated than Miami, making public transport easier to operate, and 86 percent of the population are public transport users. However, it also had some major disadvantages to overcome:

1. Bogotá is the only major South American city, except Lima, Peru, without a metro system.
2. The bus system is not city-owned but private, and largely consists of old, rickety smoke-belching buses.
3. Buses are usually plagued by muggings. Concerns about crime were high. As one local put it, “It's going to be a banner day for the robbers.”
4. Opposition from car owners was strong.

Francisco Rojas Birry sought a court injunction to stop the Car-Free Day, claiming that the proposal violated fundamental private property rights, freedom of movement and the right to work of residents of Bogotá and neighbouring municipalities.

5. Local business also opposed the plans, insisting that they would cause “incalculable losses,” especially to exports. Fears of damaging the economy were particularly powerful, as Columbia is in the grip of the worst recession in more than half a century.

Peñalosa put a great deal of energy into push-

ing forward his proposal, and sought help in planning from both local and international consultants. The result was a day in which the city's 832,000 private automobiles were refused entry from 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Most Bogotáños enjoyed the day: 85 percent of commuters traveled by public transport, 1.5 million cycled and a few rode horses or skated. There were some complaints about rain, bus drivers being rude to cyclists and the lack of adequate public transport.

As for improving life in the city, the statistics seem clear:

- Local hospitals reported a 20 to 30 percent decrease in the number of emergency treatments. Traffic accidents fell from the daily average of 100 to just 27. There were only 24 injuries, compared to the usual 70 to 80, and no fatalities for the first time in three years, in a city that averages two to three traffic deaths each day.

- There was an eight percent reduction in airborne nitrogen dioxide, 22 percent reduction to carbon monoxide, and 21 percent for particulates, compared to a similar, rainy day, though measurements taken before the rain showed a significantly greater drop in air pollution levels.

Comment: It is hard to criticise the Bogotá Car-Free Day. Which is not to say it was perfect. It was held on a Thursday, it was the first-ever Car-Free Day to go city-wide, it was perceived as a success locally and it was organised without any real precedent, because European Car-Free days have been very timid in comparison.

So I could complain—but I won't—that exceptions to the ban were granted to motorcycles, big trucks and the armour-plated vehicles used by the business and political elite, so not everyone tasted alternative transport and the day was hardly democratic. After all, given Columbia's political and economic situation and the city's crime rate it is not surprising that Peñalosa was forced to grant such concessions.

And the fact is, that if a city with the problems faced by Bogotá can hold a successful mid-week, city-wide Car-Free Day—then anywhere can do it.

And as Eric Britton from Ecoplan has said, the world's best Car-Free Day “will be the next one that is approached with the same level of commitment and energy that we saw in Bogotá.” As long as it also aims to “change the Car-Free Day template and turn it into something that is more activist, more creative and more profoundly democratic,” enabling “the level of insights that are needed if we are ever to refit our transportation systems into something that has a chance of being sustainable and socially just.”

September 21 could just be such a day, with your help. n

**WE'VE APPEASED NON-SMOKERS...
NOW, LET'S APPEASE NON-DRIVERS!!
DIVIDE CITIES INTO TWO SECTIONS:
DRIVING AND NON-DRIVING**



THE E.U. CAR-FREE DAY

RANDY GHENT

Something seems desperately wrong to me when alternative transport groups are signing on their support and helping to organise a high-level European Union initiative such as the September 22 Car-Free Day. Why do I say this? Is it because the initiative is a particularly bad one? No.

If we assume for a moment that these particular bureaucrats, the Car-Free Day promoters, are "good bureaucrats," does it really help them to have our unqualified support? No. In fact the opposite. They'll always be viewed as more reasonable and prag-matic if we as a movement take a stronger position—for example taking on car ownership rather than just car use, or by promoting the cre-ation or expansion of car-free zones beyond just commercial or tourist centres. The possibilities of such positions are endless; many could prove popular. They are as yet totally off the public's radar screen.

But if our movement shows to the public the same level of radicalism as do E.U. bureaucrats, then what net effect would we be having on public opinion? And if the answer is "none," then why continue in such a hopeless direction? Answer: we must not. Our role as a movement is to draw public opinion further toward fundamental reform than government will dare to advocate. We will always get less than what we ask for, so we should take the strongest reasonable position, "be realistic and demand the impossible," and let the politicians make the compromises.

We should start thinking about how the shaping of public opinion actually works. Let's look at it as a see-saw—yes, a see-saw. But instead of children of more or less equal weight sitting on each end of a board, here industry and alternative transport groups sit as weights on opposite ends of the board (see diagram). Only the see-saw's pivot point is not in the centre, and industry, as you know, weighs a lot more than we do. Here we place all the possible politi-

cal positions on the see-saw board, from "4x4s for all" at the far right to "for a world without cars" at the far left.

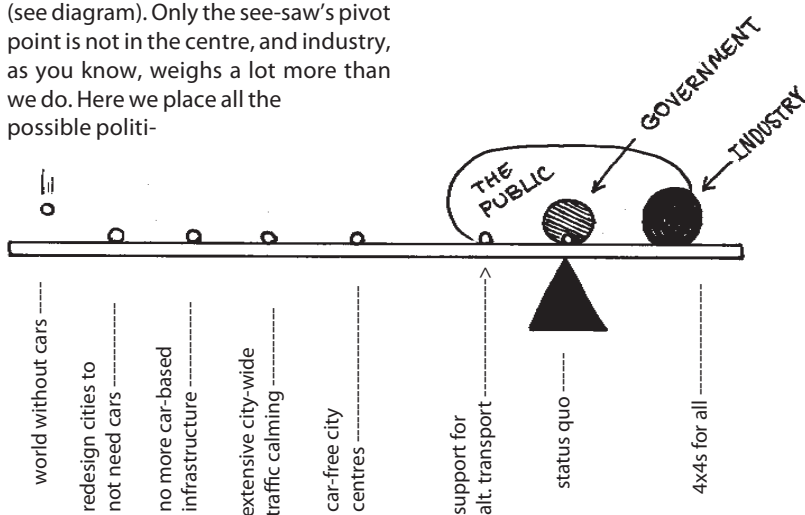
Government, and the public too, are represented on this bizarre quasi-see-saw. Only government doesn't go very far left or right, preferring a place of balance, in the middle of the spectrum of all "interest groups." So government will normally be very close to industry, in the midst of public opinion, directly above the see-saw's pivot point.

And here's the crucial part: the public can be drawn toward either end of the board, depending on the actions of industry, government, other actors, and ourselves.

But given the weight of industry and government and those aligned with them, the public aren't aware of how far the board extends to the left. Often, they haven't noticed us sitting way out at our end of the board. Our weight is so small, and we're too far away to be seen very well. Some groups in our movement have moved closer to the public, which has in turn drawn the public a bit further left on the board, compensating for the loss of leverage.

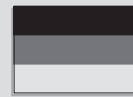
Others in our movement—those giving their wholehearted support for the "clean car," for example—have moved so far to the centre of the board that they now occupy the same position as William Clay Ford, Jr. They argue that their (miniscule) weight will draw more of the industry toward their position, but in reality industry cares much more about profitability and public opinion. So "clean car" proponents sit more or less directly above the pivot point, contributing little if anything to either side.

The further we move toward government, the more industry tips the



TRANSLATION

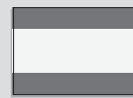
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Etwas scheint strategisch falsch zu sein, wenn verkehrs-gruppen ihre Unterstützung und Hilfe für die Planung einer hochgestochenen Initiative der Europäischen Union wie den autofreien Tag am 22. September anbieten. Ist

es, weil die Initiative eine besonders schlechte wäre? Nein. Nehmen wir für einen Moment an, dass eben die Bürokraten, welche den autofreien Tag in die Wege leiten, "gute Bürokraten" sind: hilft es ihnen dann tatsächlich, unsere uneingeschränkte Unterstützung zu haben? Nein. Tatsächlich ist das Gegenteil der Fall. Sie werden stets als viel vernünftiger und ragmatischer angesehen, wenn unsere Bewegung eine radikalere Position einnimmt - zum Beispiel den Besitz von Autos angreift, anstatt nur den Gebrauch, oder für autofreie Gebiete wirbt anstatt nut für autofreie Touristen- und Kommerz-zonen.

Doch wenn unsere Bewegung der Öffentlichkeit genauviel oder -wenig Radikalismus zeigt wie die EU-Bürokraten, welchen Effekt hätten wir dann auf die öffentliche Meinung? Und wenn die Antwort "Keinen" ist, warum sollten wir dann in einer so hoffnungslosen Richtung weitermachen? Die Antwort: wir dürfen es eben nicht. Unsere Rolle als Bewegung ist, die öffentliche Meinung mehr in Richtung grundlegender Reformen zu bringen als Regierungen je befürworten werden. Wir werden stets weniger bekommen als wir fordern, deswegen sollten wir die radikalste Position einnehmen, die sich vernünftig vertreten lässt - "seid realistisch, fordert das Unmögliche", und lasst die Politiker die Kompromisse machen. n



En mi opinión algo falla en la estrategia cuando los grupos alternativos que trabajan en temas de transporte apoyan con su firma y colaboran en la organización de una iniciativa oficial de la Unión Europea como el día sin coches previsto

para el 22 de Septiembre. ¿Es porque la iniciativa es particularmente mala? No. Si asumimos por un momento que los burócratas en cuestión, los promotores del día sin coches, son "buenos burócratas", ¿Realmente les ayuda contar con nuestro apoyo entusiasta? No. De hecho es al contrario. Siempre serán considerados más pragmáticos y razonables si nosotros como movimiento asumimos una posición más dura, por ejemplo poniendo en cuestión la posesión del automóvil en lugar de simplemente su uso, o promoviendo la creación o expansión de áreas peatonales, libres de coches, más alla de las zonas comerciales o centros turísticos. Pero si el movimiento muestra el mismo nivel de radicalismo que los burócratas de U.E., entonces, ¿cuál es nuestro mensaje propio a la opinión pública? Y si la respuesta es "ninguno" entonces, ¿por qué continuar en una dirección tan desesperanzadora? Respuesta: no debemos. Nuestra tarea como movimiento es llamar la atención de la opinión pública más allá, hacia cambios más profundos de los que pueda promover la administración. Siempre obtendremos menos de lo que planteamos, así que debemos defender las posiciones más duras que sea razonable mantener, "ser realistas y demandar lo im-posible", y dejar a los políticos llegar a compromisos. n

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Why I Don't Support...

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see-saw down on its end—thus winning the battle. Since government will never take a more radical position than our own, a failure to stay more radical than government amounts to arresting our movement's progress. At such a realisation, there are two sane options: pack up the campaign and go home, or take a position further left.

It has to be our job—and that goes for all alternative transport groups—to maintain a stronger position than government. Radical groups among us should forget about trying to sound reasonable if it would be at the expense of impact, and go for finding the right tactics to bring radical ideas into public consciousness. Groups doing public education or community outreach should find ways to sound reasonable advocating radical positions. The job of the most conservative groups among us must be to push government along in the right direction. Our role should never be to stand on the sidelines and cheer. In the E.U. Car-Free Day case we can let the public take on that role. They'll do it anyway, as they have already shown.

We are often able to balance out industry's heavy weight by drawing the public toward our end (as in Denmark and the Netherlands, where progress has been made). But in this movement one obvious quality of our see-saw has been overlooked: the ability of a small weight, leveraged way out at the long end of the board, to really shake things up by jumping up and down wildly. If its energy is focussed strategically and efficiently it can make itself noticed in a big way, attract more weights in our movement out toward it, along with some weights from among the public, coming to define the leftward end of public opinion.

And this, friends, is exactly what World Car-Free Day intends to be: the tiny but bold and energetic little weight at the left end of the see-saw board. Rather than focussing on car-use reduction in city centres, and other reforms that much of the public already supports (in theory) anyway, we'll need the help of the entire movement and allies working on other issues to call the public's attention over to the possibilities of more fundamental change. Although we work toward lasting change, we still need the tactic of a single-day event to focus our limited energies. But the message going out has got to be consistent with our position on the board, radical but extremely well-packaged all the same. n



Germans Go Car-Free Without the E.U.

Since 1987 German transport groups have organised an annual Car-Free Sunday, and since 1990 it has become a tradition to hold the "Mobile Without the Car" day in June, with street parties, info booths, bike rides and other colourful happenings. The federal government supports it financially, and most years about half a million people have participated.

In 1997, 350 events were organised by some 2,000 activists. However, the big environmental groups have drawn back from the network more and more, and started to get interested in the concept of the European Car-Free Day.

Grassroots groups such as the environmental student groups BSÖ strongly criticise this development. They don't target the idea of a European Car-Free Day as such, but they do fear that due to the bureaucratic structures of the E.U. it will become

a top-down event, and they would have to cut back on radicalism and spontaneity. There is no reason to drop the original day in June—isn't it the declared goal of both government and activists to form a habit?

Grassroots groups are now building a new network in order to save the original initiative and are calling for another "Mobile Without the Car" Sunday on June 18. n

- Sina Arnold

If you'd like to organise a car-free event for June 18, or want more information, contact:

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Referat Ökologie und Umwelt
Stichwort MoA, Unter den Linden 6,
10099 Berlin; tel: +(49) 30-2093-2603
fax: +(49) 30-2093-2396
e-mail: oeko@refrat.hu-berlin.de
www.refrat.hu-berlin.de/MOA

Dutch Groups Applaud E.U. Car-Free Day

On Sunday, September 24, the Netherlands will have its Car-Free Sunday, organised by LOAZ (National Committee for a Car-Free Sunday) and Milieudéfensie (Friends of the Earth Netherlands). LOAZ and Milieudéfensie applaud the initiative for the European Car-Free Day on Friday, September 22.

Taking into account Dutch tradition and possibilities, Car-Free Day in the Netherlands will be two days later. We think European Car-Free Day and Dutch Car-Free Sunday are like brother and sister, who support and strengthen each other.

In 1973 the Netherlands had seven Car-Free Sundays organised by the government, which feared an oil shortage due to the so-called oil crisis. The majority of people enjoyed those Car-Free Sundays.

Since then, several citizens' initiatives have tried to reintroduce the Car-Free Sunday in the Netherlands. LOAZ was successful in that effort and organised, with support from Milieudéfensie, a national Car-Free Sunday on September 19, 1999, with

events in 54 cities. Most of these were initiated by local citizens' groups with the support of local authorities. Activities ranged from children's games in the street to discussions with politicians to rollerskating-disco in a parking garage.

LOAZ is a group of individuals recruited from local initiative groups for a Car-Free Sunday and from national traffic and religious organizations. The need for a break in the ordinary course of the week in favour of rest and social contact is, for many people, an important drive for a Car-Free Sunday. Not only for Christians, also for people who oppose developments towards a 24-hour economy. In this sense we see Car-Free Sundays as goals in themselves. n

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A CALL TO ACTION!

WORLD CAR-FREE DAY

SEPTEMBER 21, 2000

Are you ready? It's time to join together around the world for the ultimate subversion of car culture—World Car-Free Day, September 21, 2000.

That's just 24 hours before the timid high-level European Car-Free Day. We'll be here to steal the show, and spread the message to other continents. So let's make it big, bold and impossible to ignore.

Let's focus our energy on one hard-hitting and splashy moment, forcing everyone to take notice, form an opinion, react with either anger or delight, and realise that a global car-free movement exists. You can't build a movement if nobody knows about it—and today very few people do.

So that's where you come in. To have impact we need tactics that have impact. Clear, simple, outrageous, scandalous, creative tactics. We don't always need huge masses of people, but the people we do have need to be at the right place at the right time, doing the right thing.

Tactics like painting bike-lane symbols in car lanes all over town. Fining drivers with fake parking tickets for hogging public space or contributing to climate change. Riding bicycles with "space frames" to take up the same space as a Range Rover. Subverting car-ad billboards into anti-car messages. Installing home-made traffic calming devices. Painting pedestrian

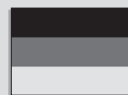
crossings or memorials to people killed by cars. Building cardboard cars chugging around friends dressed as roadkill and living dead. Organising community meals with live music, dancing and plenty of living room furniture in the middle of an intersection. Modifying stop signs to read "Stop Driving." Walking over cars parked on the pavement (sidewalk), or picking them up and "bouncing" them back into the street. Releasing stinky diesel fumes or dumping an oil spill inside a major inter-national car show.

You get the idea. The more visual and shocking the better, magnified by people doing similar things simultaneously around the world. This isn't about making as many friends as possible; if it were we'd hold Traffic Reduction Day. This is about expanding the range of reasonable public opinion and debate, calling into question not just how we get around, but how we organise public space and our very lives. The choice has never been more clear: Do we want cars (electric or not) or do we want cities for people and nature? n - RG

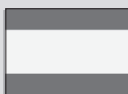
Join Car Busters and other groups around the world in taking direct action September 21. We'll soon have a website with more ideas, downloadable posters and more. Get in touch!

TRANSLATION

Traduction • Traducción • Übersetzung



Seid ihr bereit? Es ist an der Zeit, sich zusammenzuschliessen für die ultimative Subversion der Autokultur - World Car-Free Day am 21. September 2000. Das wird nur 24 Stunden vor dem hochgestochenen europäischen auto-freien Tag sein. Wir werden da sein, ihnen die Schau stehlen und das Anliegen auf andere Kontinente tragen. Lasst ihn also gross, gewagt und unmöglich zu ignorieren sein. Lasst uns unsere Energien auf einen einschlagenden Moment richten, und dabei alle zwingen, zuzuschauen, mit Freude oder Ärger zu reagieren, und zu realisieren, dass tatsächlich eine Anti-Auto-Bewegung existiert. Eine Bewegung kann nicht errichtet werden, wenn niemand von ihr weiss - und das ist heute bei uns der Fall. An diesem Punkt kommt ihr ins Spiel. Um Wirkungen zu erzielen, brauchen wir wirkungsvolle Taktiken. Klare, einfache, unerhörte, skandalöse, kreative Taktiken. Wir brauchen nicht immer Massen von Leuten, aber unsere Leute müssen am richtigen Ort zur richtigen Zeit sein, das richtige Ding machen, verstärkt durch die Menschen, die rund um den Globus ähnliche Dinge tun. Es geht hier nicht darum, so viel Freunde wir möglich zu gewinnen; es geht um die Erweiterung des Spektrums der öffentlichen Meinung und Debatte. Schliesst Euch Car Busters und anderen Gruppen auf der Welt an, um am 21. September direkte Aktionen durchzuführen. Bald werden wir eine Web Site mit mehr Ideen sowie Postern zum Herunterladen haben. Kontaktiert uns! n



¿Estás preparado? Es el momento de unirse en todo el mundo para organizar el proximo asalto a la cultura del automóvil: el Día Mundial Sin Coches a celebrar el 21 de Septiembre del 2000. Es justo 24 horas antes del día sin coches oficial de la Unión

Europea. Estaremos ahí para para reventar el espectáculo y divulgar el mensaje a otros continentes. Así que montemos una buena, sonada e imposible de ignorar. Centremos nuestras energías en un golpe fuerte, forzando a darse por enterado a todo el mundo, a reaccionar con indignación o entusiasmo, y asumir que existe un movimiento anti-coches global. No se puede construir un movimiento si nadie lo conoce -y actualmente muy poca gente lo hace. Aquí es donde entras tu. Para tener buena repercusión necesitamos tácticas que tengan impacto. Tácticas claras, simples, provocadoras, escandalosas y creativas. No siempre contamos con grandes masas de gente, pero las personas de las que disponemos deben estar en el sitio y en el momento justo haciendo lo acordado, magnificados por personas haciendo cosas similares simultaneamente en todo el mundo. No se trata de ganar simpatías, se trata de expandir el ámbito del debate público. Unete a Car Busters y a otros grupos por todo el mundo para participar en la acción directa del 21 de Septiembre. Pronto tendremos una página web con más ideas, carteles descargables y más. Ponte en contacto. n

La traduction française est fournie dans un supplement inséré dans tous les magazines destinés aux pays francophones. Contactez Car Busters si vous voulez le recevoir dans un pays non-francophone.



Long-time Car-Free Day promoter tells all

An Interview with Eric Britton

Eric Britton, managing director of Ecoplan International, has been pushing for Car-Free Days for years as an advisor and consultant, and as convener of The Commons, an Internet-based world-wide open forum with discussion groups on Car-Free Days and other topics concerned with the impact of technology on people's daily lives. Britton was a founding member of Ecoplan in 1966. His "Thursday" proposal, summarised below, led to the French Car-Free Day experiments and many other such events. Appropriate to Britton's cyberspatial embrace, we conducted this interview via e-mail.

CB: So how exactly is the ideal Car-Free Day event intended to affect people on a personal level?

It should give them an opportunity to open their eyes and see their city a bit more as they might like to have it. Whereas on a normal day we are literally blinded by the present; it is close to impossible for people to conceive of the place they live in very much differently from the realities and constraints of their current daily existence.

I have more confidence in an active and responsible community than I do in hierarchical forms of governance and centralised administrations and technicians. This, to my mind, is one of the great potential contributions of a Car-Free Day. It puts the citizenry in the driver's seat. As we put it in Bogotá, a Car Free Day turns every person in town into transportation policy consultants...as opposed to a lot of highly paid visitors in suits.

CB: You say in your "Thursday" report that, no matter how much alternative transport infrastructure we put in place, most drivers are not going to leave their cars behind until the day they, yourself included, no longer have the choice to drive. What's your prescription for a self-described, self-diagnosed car addict such as yourself?

The leading edge of thinking in transport, environment and city circles have come to understand that what is required is something like a pincer move, of which you can see the good results in a growing number of European cities.

You simply and steadily decrease the amount of urban real estate that is available to the private car. The first key to this is in the steady reduction of parking supply, and in parallel with this the transfer of road space from car to other more effective and sustainable transport uses (reserved lanes for public transport, bike lanes, pedestrianisation, etc.). That's step 1. But in tandem with this it is also important to upgrade the alternative transport system.

CB: In a nutshell, what do you see as the lessons of the French, Italian and Columbian examples?



of longer-range planning, but a pretty high energy level. It shows what can be accomplished when an energetic mayor is ready to put his reputation on the line to make one of these things work. In my view, the most courageous and most interesting model to date.

CB: How did the French Environment Minister, Dominique Voynet, become a promoter of Car-Free Days? Did she or her staff meet with you and become convinced? Has she taken the idea as proposed to her, or has

The principal advantage of the French approach is that at least it has brought up the idea.

By and large, however, the actual executions of the projects are poorly thought through, not really negotiated or discussed with the community at large, and with few exceptions rarely followed up on—if by follow up we refer to that precious learning experience which is supposed to be at the core of a Car-Free Day and whose ultimate result is to introduce meaningful alterations in the transportation arrangements of that place.

The Italian approach is even more opportunistic, but if you look closely enough, as I have, you will see that along with all the almost meaningless "nice day" low-perturbation Sunday projects, there are a handful of places that are beginning to give it a much more serious go. I am hopeful that some useful new models are going to emerge from the Italian experience.

Of course it is great that they have gone for the concept of holding them in a repeated manner. One can only hope that they will give them the analytic resources and attention that are needed to make the longer-run structural differences that are needed.

Bogotá? Great project. Pretty chaotic. Carried out with an absolute minimum

she watered it down?

I hesitate a bit to address this since memory so often can be one-sided. But let me do the best I can.

After the first public Level 3 Pollution Alert in Paris in September 1997, for which the Environment Ministry was famously unprepared, I went to the Forward Planning Unit of Ms. Voynet's cabinet and proposed a "tool kit" of measures. I felt this was needed to prepare the way for more effective future responses, and indeed to begin to mitigate the underlying causes of the air pollution problems.

Chief among these was the "Thursday" project, which I had previously proposed in Spain during a "Ciudades Accesibles" international conference, which, as luck would have it, was attended by the chief planners of La Rochelle and Reykjavik. Both cities carried out first-rate Car-Free Day projects two years later.

After this presentation, my working papers disappeared in the minister's office, only to arise again with their own sobriquet ("In Town Without My Car!") and no mention of the rich history.

The "In Town" days were then announced and by and large carried out as unprepared,

largely rhetorical events, for which little advance work was done in most of the participating towns and the standard operating procedure was to hold them and then immediately declare victory. That more or less continues to this day.

CB: What's your strategy for implementing Car-Free Days in the United States, the belly of the car culture beast?

Two-level strategy: First just to continue to push through the "@World" web site and my many contacts there to get these ideas into the agenda as something which is serious and potentially useful. I have avoided a confrontational approach—since the car establishment is so terribly dominant there. My immediate priority is seeing if I can do anything to begin with a couple of Car-Free Days in Puerto Rico, and we are currently discussing this with several mayors there. It's an uphill struggle, but maybe we can do something in a few places with this new World approach.

CB: World approach?

Yes, as you can perhaps imagine we have had this idea in mind for some time, but have been concentrating first on getting the right "template" (plural actually) before going out to get that level of activity.

However, upon hearing from you, we decided to put the idea to hundreds of people, many with considerable expertise and hands-on experience in organising Car-Free Days, to get their views, suggestions and eventual support for such an event. You can find full background on this if you go to the "@World CFD 2000" link on the <www.ecoplan.org> web site.

CB: But Car-Free Days are very popular in Europe. Are these E.U. people really that marginalised? Nobody's suggesting that we not work with them, but should we be congratulating them and leaving it at that, or gently pushing them along toward more long-lasting change?

"Very popular"? Well, I would not be quite

so quick to judge, based on media buzz and some pretty casual and unexamined experiences, which account for most of what has taken place in Europe to date.

Our approach is to continue to work along the lines you will see in the "@World Car-Free Day" web site, which means direct contact with cities and groups that want to be bolder, stride well beyond today's E.U. agenda. Our recent cooperative project in Bogotá is one example. We have a dozen or so more in various stages of discussion.

Beyond that it's our policy to post all work and progress, and to invite everyone, including the people involved in the proposed European 2000 day, which we sincerely applaud. We're glad they're there, but we have no intention to leave it at that. More and more ambitious is needed.

CB: Being a long-time promoter of car-free days, what's your take on car manufacturers signing on in support? Do you think Vaynet's people chose the "In Town Without My Car!" title deliberately to let them in on the action—to say, "don't worry, we're not opposed to the continuing growth of car sales"?

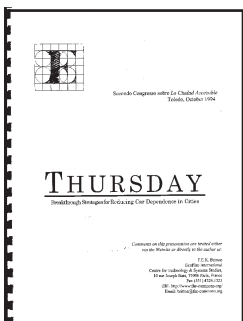
Well, as you may remember I am a Prodigal Son type. I believe that most of us have traditionally made a lot of mistakes in our daily life choices in many important areas of community and social justice, and that living is a learning process.

So if GM or Renault wants to give us a pile of money so that we can do this better yet, we'll do it, thanks and let's go ahead. But if they think they can get the agenda off track, well, they checked into the wrong place.

That said, one of my incipient fears with the government-led car-free movement is that they feel they must be "reasonable," and when pressed to explain why, tell us that it is necessary to "strike a balance, bearing in mind that the automotive industry is an important source of jobs and well-being in our country." Hmm. That's worth a thought, I guess. Oh why not, maybe two!

CB: You've expressed both encouragement and reservation for Car Busters' World Car-Free Day idea. Could you go into that a bit?

Britton's "Thursday" report has as its point of departure the idea that you cannot engage in meaningful dialogue with addicts; you must start treating them. This means thrusting the poor souls (the author included) into a no-choice situation, at least for a time.



The report admits that Car-Free Days have been around for a few decades, but, instead of organising one-off exercises to be quickly forgotten, such events must involve careful prior study, extensive

consultation, meticulous monitoring and thorough evaluation. Only then can we build upon the experience and gain insight on how to organise the city for people, not cars.

"Thursday" states that such a programme will best be initiated and carried out at the local level, as a self-organised cooperative venture of a highly spontaneous sort.

"And if you try to do a 'Thursday' on, say, a Sunday or holiday, you will have learned almost nothing at all about your city," Britton writes. "Also, it is important that the project be organised (a) not on a day immediately adjacent to the weekend and (b) rather in the second half of the week than at the beginning (so that people will have enough time to get priority tasks out of the way first). Hence the choice of Thursday." n

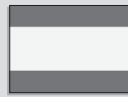
TRANSLATION

Traducción • Übersetzung



Hier interviewen wir Eric Britton von Ecoplan International, welcher sich seit Jahren in seiner Rolle als Regie-rungsberater für autofreie Tage einsetzt. Sein "Donnerstag"-Vorschlag,

welcher hier zusammengefasst wird, führte zu den französischen und einigen weiteren autofreien Experimenten. Britton ist oft enttäuscht über die Art und Weise, in welcher die autofreien Tage der Regierungen organisiert werden. "Die tatsächlichen Durchführungen der Projekte sind oft schlecht überdacht und nicht wirklich besprochen und verhandelt mit den Gemeinden, und werden ausser in Ausnahmen nicht weitergeführt," sagt er. Aber Beispiele wie Bogota geben ihm Hoffnung: "Ein grossartiges Projekt. Ziemlich chaotisch. Ausgetragen mit dem absolutem Minimum an langfristiger Planung, aber mit einem ziemlich hohen Energieniveau. Meiner Meinung nach das mutigste und interessanteste Vorbild bis heute." Zuversichtlich, doch auch zögernd zeigt sich Britton bezüglich der Idee des World Car-Free Day: «Die Idee eines Anarcho-Car-Free Day gefällt mir sehr. Auf der anderen Seite wäre ich äusserst enttäuscht, wenn das letztendliche Ergebnis das Zurückwerfen einer Bewegung wäre, welche - wenn auch unvollkommen—so doch real und vorwärtsstrebend ist. Doch wie grossartig wäre es, wenn euer Ansatz tatsächlich so werden würde, wie ihr die Idee beschreibt: "radikal, clever, brillant, gut durchdacht, humorvoll, grassroots, treffend, einschlagend"...Und erwähnte ich bereits "gut durchdacht"? n



Entrevistamos aquí a Eric Britton de Ecoplan International, que ha estado promoviendo días sin coches durante años como asesor y consultor gubernamental. Su propuesta del "Jueves", resumida

aquí, llevó al día sin coches en Francia y en muchos otros sitios. A menudo Britton se muestra decepcionado por la forma en que se organizan los días sin coche oficiales. "La forma en la que se desarrollan los proyectos suele ser poco pensada, ríñ negociada o discutida realmente en sociedad, y con muy pocas excepciones no suele haber continuidad" dice. Pero ejemplos como el de Bogotá le dan esperanzas: "Buen proyecto. Bastante caótico. Llevado adelante con apenas mínimos planes de más largo alcance, pero realizado con coraje. Desde mi punto de vista, el modelo más interesante y más valiente realizado hasta la fecha". En cuanto a la iniciativa del Día Mundial Sin Coches, Britton expresa ambos apoyo y ciertas dudas: "La idea de un Día Mundial Sin Coches alternativo me atrae. Por otro lado (aquí se le ve el plumero de académico) me desilusionaría mucho si el resultado final fuera el retroceso de un movimiento que es real, ciertamente imperfecto, pero que a pesar de todo avanza. Pero que bueno sería si vuestra iniciativa acabara saliendo como describis la idea: radical, inteligente, pulida, bien pensada, con humor, participativa, sonada, un golpe de efecto... Y ¿dije bien pensada"? n



Skill Sharing

Partage de compétences • Praktische aufteilungen
Compartiendo habilidades

banner MAKING

BY RACHEL & ADELE

Follow this guide to banner-making with the help of a literate adult and we guarantee you'll have the best banner in the parade!

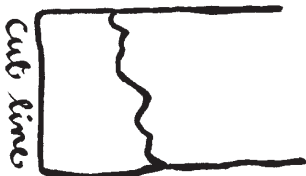
Pacing

To make a banner for a specific place the first go on a reconnaissance mission, if possible, and "pace the space" to gauge what size your banner should be.

Example: Hanging a banner across a road. Pace out the ground between two tying-up points, such as two lamp-posts, between which the banner will hang. Make sure to walk normally, don't draw attention to yourself! Count how many steps you take, then go to a safe place for making your banner and pace out the same number of steps, marking on the floor where the first step began and the last step ended. Measure the distance, then measure and cut a banner shorter than the overall length. Cut two lengths of rope longer than the measured distance between your tying-up points, leaving plenty of extra rope.

Squaring Up the Ends

Both ends of fabric should be cut at right angles to the top and bottom of fabric. If you don't have a right angle gadget, you can simply pull your material tight, then fold the end over a few centimetres. Making sure the top and bottom edges of the fold are in line with the top and bottom edges of the banner, pin in place and trim off excess material. Repeat for other end.



Hemming

It is easiest done with a sewing machine. Turn the top and bottom edges over by 1 cm then turn over again by 2.5 cm and pin. Sew close to the edge making sure there is enough room for the rope to pass through the hem.

Working Out the Dimensions

Measure the width of your banner, then subtract a few centimetres for the border. Then divide the remaining length by the number of letters and word spaces in your slogan, i.e. NO MORE ROADS! = 12 letters + 2 spaces = 14.

Divide the length of the fabric by 14, and chalk 14 boxes onto your banner to act as guides when painting. Note, word spaces do not necessarily need as much space as letters, and narrow letters such as "i" or lower-case "l" won't need the same width as other letters, so you may wish to adjust box sizes for these figures to get a more "professional-looking" banner.

Alternatively, to make a long slogan fit onto a smaller-sized banner, you can simply measure spaces for words instead of individual letters and fit smaller lower case letters under/over capital letters. Or letters could cross over each other in certain places. As long as it's readable, anything goes.

Remember to always leave a border, however, to make the banner more readable. You may wish to practice first on a sized-to-scale piece of paper. Mark out your measurements to scale, and draw on your slogan and any images you wish to use, to get an idea of how your banner will look.

Painting

Test different types of paint on a spare piece of the fabric you are going to use to check if it will crack off once it has dried. Water-based paint dries quicker than oil paint, and you don't need turpentine or white spirit to clean your paint brushes.

You can use decorators' brushes for

painting inside the chalk lines of the letters. For the edges of letters, it is better to use very good brushes or artist's brushes with small heads, something between 1/4" and 3/4" heads and not too soft, such as sable, though these are horribly expensive.

It is better to apply two or three thin coats of paint rather than one thick coat, as it is quicker to apply, dries faster and is less likely to crack and fall off once the banner is folded or scrunched up. Once the paint has dried, wash off the chalk lines with a damp cloth.

Roping Up

If the rope is new, it will have to be stretched. Tie one end around something and pull hard at the other end: this will help stop the banner from sagging once it is hung in place. Take your two lengths of rope and either



burn the ends with a lighter or wrap tape around them to stop fraying. Wrap lots of tape around one end of each length as stiffener and thread them through the top and bottom hems until an equal amount extends from either end. It is easier if two people do this.

If you wrap a different-coloured tape around the end of the top, right-hand rope, you can immediately see which way round to hang the banner when you arrive at your destination, particularly useful if you are in a hurry and it is folded up.

Greenpeace Fights Tar Sands Development

Greenpeace escalated its campaign to stop the expansion of tar sands development in Alberta, Canada, by climbing a 400-tonne coker on March 13, stopping its journey north from Edmonton. The coker, which will be used to turn tar sands into oil, is destined for the Suncor project near Fort McMurray, northern Alberta.

In freezing conditions, five Greenpeace activists prevented the coker from leaving its location outside Edmonton. Two climbers deployed a banner accusing the oil companies Syncrude, Shell, Canadian Natural Resources, Esso and Suncor for being "climate villains" because of their plans to greatly expand extraction of oil from the tar sands.

Two activists locked onto an axle of the trailer carrying the coker while another blocked the front of the truck locked into barrels of concrete. Steven Guilbeault, one of the climbers, said, "If these projects are allowed to proceed, over the next ten years greenhouse gas emissions from tar sands will make up 25 percent of the increase for all of Canada." The March 13 action was part of Greenpeace's international campaign to stop the development of new fossil fuel frontiers. In Australia, Greenpeace is calling on Suncor to stop the Project Stuart oil shale developments, and in the Arctic, eight Greenpeace activists have established a camp to monitor the construction of BP Amoco's controversial Northstar project, the first offshore oil project in the Arctic Ocean.

"In order to avoid the worst impacts of climate change, we cannot afford to use even one-quarter of known fossil fuels reserves," added Paul Horsman, Greenpeace oil campaigner. "It is simply suicidal to continue

expanding those reserves."

Roll-Up Zebra Crossing

A quick solution to pedestrians' problems crossing the road? How about a roll-up zebra crossing (that's a crosswalk, Americans) that you can carry around with you! See pictures at <http://info.pitt.edu/~ctnst3/chindogu/chin10.html>.

- SUSTRAN Resource Centre

Police Train for Riots with Reclaim the Streets

On March 18, 3,000 people rallied to protest destructive transport policies in Sydney, Australia, with music coming from solar-powered sound systems mounted in sculptures made from deconstructed cars and pulled by people-power. The crowd marched to George Street, Sydney's main road, outside the town hall, where a one-hour occupation ensued. The march then held a one-hour occupation of the site of a soon-to-be-constructed \$500-million motorway tunnel. The rally then moved to the Eastern Distributor Tollway, which has destroyed much of Sydney's inner city and parks. The tollgates were occupied by citizens who barricaded the site with road barriers, human bodies and flags.

Due to police violence, the planned 20-minute protest there dragged on for one and a half hours. It was a classic police riot, peaceful protesters attacked by poorly trained, disorganised and aggressive police. The police were out of control—punching people, crushing them with horses, using torture holds, capsicum spray, collapsible metal truncheons, even pulling a handgun on a woman at one point. Three police

officers and a number of protesters were hospitalised.

It is believed police were using this as a training exercise in crowd control for anticipated protests by indigenous-rights and anti-corporate activists at the September Olympic games.

- Citizen P., RTS crew

Symbolic Wall Blocks Tunnel

The inhabitants of valleys in the Italian and French Alps have been fighting against the dangers of lorry traffic for years, but nobody listened. It took a catastrophe to make politicians aware of the problem. After the fire in the Mont Blanc Tunnel in March last year, national politicians announced a radical change in transport policy.

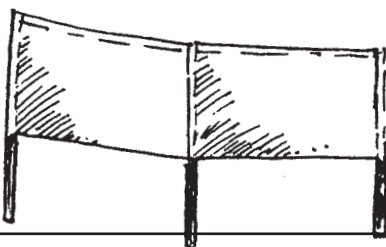
The Mont Blanc people welcomed the words but are still waiting for deeds. They have been rather active themselves, launching a petition against the return of lorries which was signed by 100,000 people within a few months. They built a symbolic wall in front of the Mont Blanc Tunnel on October 30 when about 2,000 people, over 100 NGOs and the mayor of Chamonix and three other mayors and an E.U. parliamentarian expressed support for the cause. Now they are setting up an international coalition of NGOs, politicians and other bodies to fight for a viable future and against the return of lorries to the region.

For more information, contact Renate Zauner, Initiative Transport Europe, Postfach 29, CH-3900 Brig; tel. +(41) 27-924-22-26; e-mail: alpitem@rhone.ch.

Banner-making tips

Material and paint

- Light material is best, as banners are usually carried.
- Ripstop nylon is really good for big banners (it's light, filters sunlight beautifully and doesn't fray).
- Some materials take paint better than others (thinner ripstop takes it best).
- Gloss paint sticks well, emulsion often peels off. Acrylic is nice but expensive.



Finishing up

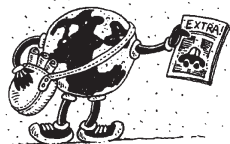
- Sew a hem, top and bottom, to make a tube about three cm. Thread the rope through (six mm is plenty).
- Handsew your banner to a rope at intervals with strong nylon thread to prevent curtain effect.
- If your banner is to be hung in mid-air, cut holes or v-shapes to let the wind through and prevent a powerful sail effect. It's very important to cut slits in a marching banner!
- If your banner is to be hung on a building, weights on the bottom are good (e.g. sew two-pence coins or the equivalent into the bottom hem).

Banner-making ABC's

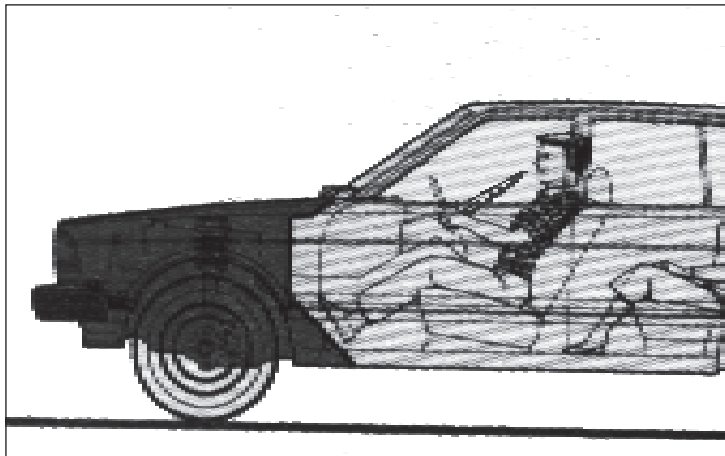
- Work out what you want to say.
- Design your banner on a small piece of paper.
- Simplicity is often best.
- Practice type faces; maybe look in a book for inspiration.
- Chalk out the letters.
- Always check spelling with an adult.
- Sew the banner before painting.
- If you want to protect your carpet underneath, laying a tarpaulin out first is better than using newspaper, as it tends to stick.
- Do a test first: Paint on a spare piece of material, let it dry, and see if it sticks well.

World News

Nouvelles du monde • Nachrichten aus aller Welt • Noticias del mundo



*Good evening,
and welcome to
your global news
network, coming
to you quarterly
from our studio
in Prague,
with your host,
Earth Man.*



Great Britain

Pedestrian Airbags?

The British government is funding research into cars with airbags on the outside, in a bid to dramatically reduce pedestrian road deaths.

The system works by using sensors mounted on the front of the car to detect pedestrians up to five metres away; a computer assesses the collision risk and inflates just before an impact.

The government's move is aimed at improving road safety figures as attempts to reduce speed limits have met with extreme opposition from drivers. Supporters of the new airbag system hope it will be a way to save lives without angering the driving lobby.

Ben Plowden, director of the Pedestrians Association, was not impressed, emphasising the need for drivers to stop speeding, especially in urban areas. He said: "The one addition to cars that would really make them slow down, and make life safer for pedestrians, is a six-inch steel spike mounted in the middle of the steering wheel."

- Sunday Times, February 27

Murders, Not Accidents

Police in Great Britain will soon be treating traffic fatalities as potential criminal cases rather than as "accidents."

A new police manual for road death investigations describes drivers who kill as possible murder or manslaughter suspects. It instructs traffic investigators in the techniques used by homicide detectives, such as sealing off the scene for a thorough forensic examination and making house-to-house enquiries for witnesses.

Driving this new-found vigilance is recent European Union legislation that allows relatives of road victims to sue police forces for improperly investigating the crime. Currently most British drivers who kill get off with a £250 fine for driving without due care and attention.

Night-Flight Ban Revoked

Thanks to DHL Express

A controversial plan by Transport

Belgium

Minister Isabelle Durant to reduce noise from Brussels' main airport by banning night flights has been overruled by Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt.

Durant's proposal suggested commercial flights be banned from 1 a.m. to 5 a.m. from mid-2003, noise quotas operating between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. be reduced by 80 percent from 1999 levels, and maximum noise levels for individual aircraft be introduced.

Verhofstadt overturned the proposal following protests by express courier DHL, which claimed the proposal ignored a recent consultation exercise and would force it to pull out of the airport with the loss of 6,000 jobs.

The cabinet decided to take responsibility for the controversial issue of noise at Zaventem Airport away from Durant and put it into the hands of a technical group. The decision came only days after the minister was given responsibility for the dossier.

- ENDS Daily

Swiss Reject Traffic-Halving

A bold initiative promoted by environmentalists failed to convince the voters.

Switzerland

referendum to reduce private motorised road traffic by 50 percent within ten years.

The proposal was put forward through a citizens' initiative, a system which allows anyone to put forward initiatives for popular vote as long as they have 100,000 supporting signatures.

The proposal did not specify the measures with which to achieve the traffic reduction, but a supporting concept plan suggested methods such as improved car occupancy through carpooling; the "eco-bonus," an ecological tax charged on gas consumption; the promotion of bicycling; the delineation of car-free urban zones; and the introduction of four Car-Free Sundays per year.

Only 21 percent of voters said yes to the

initiative, though the cities of Zurich and Bern saw a higher rate in favour, with two out of five people voting yes.

Swiss road and tunnel builders have recently started their own citizens' initiative, "Avanti," in favor of more roads.

- Climate Action Now!

Riot Police Violently

Evict U'wa Protesters

About 150 riot police flew by helicopter to

Columbia

on February 18 to disperse the hundreds of U'wa people who were blocking the road leading to an area where Occidental Petroleum wishes to start drilling—an area the U'wa consider sacred.

Although the drilling site lies outside their tribal lands, the U'wa have fiercely opposed it, saying oil exploration would bring violence and destroy their culture.

The eviction resulted in a violent clash in which police fired tear gas at the protesters, who were armed with wooden clubs and bows and arrows. Six U'wa and two police officers were injured. Tribal leaders reported that as many as five children may have fallen into a fast-flowing river and drowned in the confusion after the clash. Police initially denied the reports, but one body has since been found and two more children are officially believed to be dead.

- A-Infos News Service, 21 Feb.

Better Economy = More Pollution

Visitors to a New Delhi car show were shocked to discover what The Centre for

India

stand—an exhibition showing that during the period of 1975 to 1995, during which the Indian economy grew about 2.5 times, the total quantity of pollutants increased eight times.

- SUSTRAN News Flash, Jan. 15

How to Kill a Car with a Condom

Take a heap of condoms, fill them with water, climb to a fifth floor balcony, pick

Czech Republic

This is how one group of bored teenagers in Prague destroyed a man's Skoda. The owner was initially very upset, but decided not to place charges when he realised it would make a funny story to tell his friends down at the pub.

- Právo, via BBC News, March 27



United States

Bus Driver Criticised for Being "Somebody"

For the last three years, bus driver Robert Moore, Jr., has been chatting over a microphone to his passengers in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. He says good morning, tells them his name, and his personal motto—"I am somebody"—and then he asks them to repeat it.

He has regular mottos, millennium mottos, even a memorial motto for a pedestrian hit at a crosswalk. Sometimes he asks his passengers to turn and greet one another and, like deer in headlights, they do. It's all so new, this idea of talking to people on public transport.

But on Dec. 7, 1999, someone filed a complaint. For several weeks, Moore was not allowed to speak. Passengers were upset. Bonnie Griffin wrote to the mayor saying she was "nearly in tears" when Moore explained his silence. One person might have complained, but "a lot of other people think he's wonderful."

In mid-January, Moore reached a compromise with Chapel Hill's director. He can say his mottos, upon request. He can't use the microphone but, so far, everyone on his bus wants to hear him. So he shouts.

And with Moore at the wheel all his passengers are somebody.

- Pedalers Express

Egypt

Traffic Death Sparks Riot

Sixteen-year-old Samah Mustafa was killed by a speeding lorry while crossing the road near the village of Mit Nema, 15 km north of Cairo, on March 4. Her death sparked off a riot in which local residents seized the driver, beat him severely and set his vehicle on fire. More vehicles were set on fire and a boulder rolled on to the train lines, blocking train traffic for about an hour.

Egyptian police opened fire on the 3,000 rioters, wounding ten people. Reports say another 50 people—including six police officers—were injured, either by stones thrown by protesters or by police tear gas.

Mustafa's death was the latest in a string of fatal accidents Mit Nama villagers have blamed on the failure of authorities to build foot bridges across the busy main road.

The villagers also complained about the lack of action against motorists who routinely ignore traffic regulations.

- BBC World Service



photo: Susan Darlow

Indonesia

Becak Drivers Go on Rampage

Jakarta's attempts to clear becaks—human-powered cycle rickshaws—off city streets sparked a riot when officials began to impound the vehicles on February 29.

Six vehicles were damaged, the Pademangan district office set on fire and four city officials injured. Local residents took part in the rioting.

On February 17 six becak drivers representing some 130 fellow drivers lodged a class-action civil lawsuit against Governor Sutowo demanding that he allow becak drivers to operate in housing complexes and markets.

The lawsuit alleges that Governor Sutowo is inconsistent in his becak policy. Bylaw No. 11/1988 rules that becaks are banned in Jakarta, but on June 25, 1999, Sutowo decided to allow becak drivers to operate in the city due to the economic crisis. Shortly afterwards he reversed this decision and began confiscating the vehicles despite President Wahid's affirmation of January 23 that becaks could operate in the city's housing complexes.

On February 28, several activists were arrested outside the Presidential Palace for demonstrating against the Governor's policies. They were charged and convicted of participating in an "illegal" rally. More than 200 becak drivers showed up at the hearing the next day in support of the defendants, who denied the legality of the 1998 law under which they were arrested as "a product of a regime that didn't appreciate its residents' rights to deliver their opinion."

- The Jakarta Post

Germany

West Should Compensate for Global Warming

The World Wild Fund for Nature says global polluters should pay.

At intergovernmental discussions in Bonn on how to pay for the costs of climate change, the environmental group called upon Western industrialised countries to set up a compensation fund for countries that are victims of natural disasters linked to climate change.

A number of industrialised countries already compensate their citizens for unusual extreme weather events, and have started to implement climate adaptation measures. But none yet accepts responsibility towards developing countries.

None of the Western nations responsible for the bulk of global carbon dioxide emissions have ratified the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, nor enacted adequate measures to reduce emissions.

The Kyoto Protocol would require industrialised nations to reduce their output of global warming gases five percent below their 1990 levels between 2008 and 2012.

Governments have been unable to agree on the rules for operating the protocol. Decisions to be taken at November's climate summit in The Hague, the Netherlands, will decide whether the Kyoto Protocol evolves into an effective first step in combating climate change, or whether loopholes in the agreement allow emissions of global warming gases to continue increasing.

- World Wide Fund for Nature

Please excuse us for not having a global network of photographer correspondents. This image (above) of an Indian rickshaw driver was the closest we could get to rioting Jakartans.

BOAT

across the

ALYSON EWALD



It was a humid July midnight in Montreal. An agent met us at the station and brought us in his jeep to the freight docks, where huge machines lurked in

in the darkness like prehistoric behemoths. Clusters of sailors stood smoking, regarding us sideways. We were led to the captain's office, where he greeted us warmly, took our passports and announced the terms of the voyage.

Such was the beginning of my most recent trip from North America to Europe, not on a 757 but on the *Pomorzhe Zachodnie* (PZ), a Polish freighter carrying 16,000 metric tonnes of sunflower seeds to Spain.

My partner Alyosha and I had decided to sail to Europe and back instead of flying as part of our attempt to travel in saner, more sustainable ways. As it turned out, we found many unanticipated pleasures travelling by ship, and had an unforgettable adventure both times—though in very different ways.

Polsteam, the shipping company we used, charges US\$35.75 per day per passenger, including three decent meals a day and cabin accommodations with bed, couch, desk, shower and bathroom.

One wonderful thing about going by boat is the reason most people don't do it: it's slow. We took ten days to get from Canada to Spain, ten days of sea, sky, rest and solitude. In summer, it just cannot be compared to the stress, haste, cramped quarters and unhealthy atmosphere of flying.

However, the 14 days it took us to get back from the Netherlands to New Jersey were completely different. We travelled in mid-December across the North Atlantic and it was incredibly rough. So the ecstasy of our first trip and the disappointment of our second have led us to plan the season of our trans-Atlantic travel much more

carefully—although we still hope our next crossing will be by ship.

The People

Our captain on the PZ, a paunchy bearded man with a sharp eye and an understated wit, had a birthday party a week after we left Montreal. Strong winds and driving rain didn't hinder the flow of the beer and vodka.

One of the sailors, a lanky amiable chain-smoker, invited us to his tiny cabin and showed us pictures of his wife back in Poland. She is a singer in a small band that plays in restaurants and clubs. As we listened to her on his tape player, he told us in a slightly rueful tone that she makes US\$600 in eight days of work—more than he makes in a month.

I also got a chance to hang out with the grizzled outspoken PZ chef in his huge sunny kitchen for a while, since we'd brought some lentils and other legumes and he wanted me to show him how we like them cooked.

As I chopped garlic, he peeled potatoes and told me about his day, which starts at 4 a.m. and continues, with a mid-afternoon nap, until 7 p.m. Although I got the feeling that he didn't particularly relish catering to vegetarian weirdos, he good-naturedly cooked beans for us most days, and always brewed tasty soups for lunch.

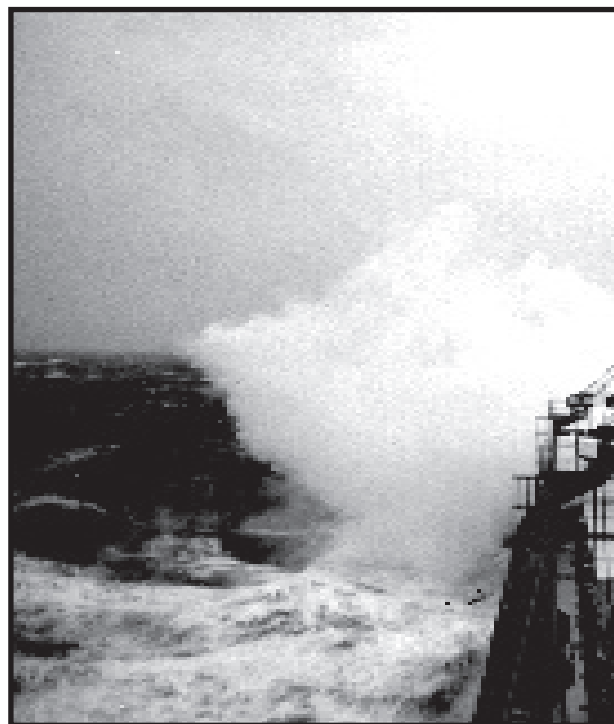
On our return trip, on a vessel called the *Isa*, we spent quite a lot of time talking with the third officer, who let us explore the lifeboat, called us when whales were sighted, and generally took opportunities to practice his English. The *Isa* captain was a small, round, boisterous man, very responsive and good-humoured. His friendliness was an antidote to the surly manner of the steward,

who we thought disapproved of us entirely, until we realised he behaved like that with everyone.

The highlight of our winter journey was the Polish Christmas celebration. There was a big formal Christmas-eve dinner, for which even the sea calmed down. Before the sumptuous meal, everyone was given a small wafer, and we all mingled around, wishing each other a merry Christmas and sharing each other's wafers. It was a lovely way to celebrate being together and enjoying the feast. After the meal, everyone sang carols.

Food, Sleep and Other Pleasures

Our meals were served at our own table, in the officers' mess. The food? Decidedly Eastern European, not spicy or varied, but fresh, filling and generally tasty. Available any time between meals were freshly baked bread, jam, cornflakes, vegetables and leftovers. We were also given fruit, bags of raisins and



nuts, and jugs of orange juice to take to our cabin.

But beware: The food can vary vastly depending on the chef, and perhaps the season. On our winter voyage, already nauseated by the storms and huge swells, we would almost invariably find only beige food on our plate. We relied on our private stash of chocolate, cookies, strong cheese and popcorn for keeping our stomachs steady.

Our cabin on the PZ was more like a suite, with its own curtained bed chamber and a private toilet with shower. On the Isa, we had the owner's cabin, a more luxurious room with a fridge and a fold-out couch, just across from the bridge. This proved to be convenient, and the view was lovely, but we experienced much more severe rocking up there than on lower decks.

Outside were benches and tables, even (on the PZ) a small pool filled with sea water in nice weather. Inside were a laundry room, a movie lounge, an exercise room, and an office. We had free access to all these areas, as well as the bridge and the open decks. On the Isa we used the satellite fax machine to send mes-sages to my parents.

Storms and Sea-Sickness

On our summer voyage, we passed most of our time outdoors, either up on the bow in the sun, watching the prow slice through the incredibly luminous deep blue water, or on a bench near our cabin. Alyosha went running every other day around the ship, to the amusement of the crew. At night we slept soundly, with a depth of sleep I've experienced before only on trains.

The winter voyage was a different story. We were in weather ranging from

near-gale to violent storm nearly the whole way. The ship rolled from side to side constantly, up to 25 degrees to either side. Swells loomed up to ten metres high. At times water washed up over the cargo deck. The nose would dip down to within a few metres of the surface, then heave up dizzyingly a few stories high.

It took us some effort to adjust to the extreme conditions. It was hard to stand without holding onto something or moving one's feet. In bed at night, we were thrown around like sacks of potatoes, our limbs rolling across our bodies. Anything not strapped down wound up on the floor.

So we spent most of our time in our cabin or on the bridge, or below-decks where it was slightly calmer. Sometimes walking outdoors in the wind would help lessen the nausea. Chewing ginger root and taking homeopathic remedies also helped, but I won't deny that a cold beer or a sip of amaretto were sometimes the only things that really worked.

Most Polsteam vessels carry grain from North America to Europe, and steel or aluminum from Europe to North America. The worst rolling happens when the cargo is steel, because it lies low and heavy in the hold. However, the time of year affects the smoothness far more than the cargo. I know people who travelled in mid-September and hit the edges of two hurricanes. It seems smoothest from April to August, but my experience is very limited. Personally I'd rather not sail again between November and March, especially if I have to travel with steel.

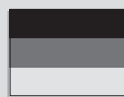
The Vessels

The Pomorzhe Zachodnie is a bit on the small side for a cargo ship, as I understand. It weighed 6,000 tonnes, measured 170 metres from bow to stern, and ten metres from the bottom to the water level when loaded. We never saw the incredible volume of cargo we were carrying until we watched the sunflower seeds being scooped and dumped into Spanish trucks by the immense claws of dinosaur-like machines.

The brand-new Japanese-built Isa is larger, 200 metres long, and designed for carrying steel. We arrived at the dock in Ijmuiden, the Netherlands, early enough to watch the 20-ton rolls of steel being lowered into the immense hold. The cargo was all Dutch steel and aluminum being delivered to the GM, Miller, and Coca-Cola plants in the U.S., bound to become car parts and soda cans. For this precious cargo, the Isa's engine, the length of our cabin and twice as tall, burned 24 tonnes of fuel per day.

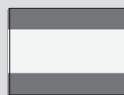
TRANSLATION

Traducción • Übersetzung



In einem Hafen in Montreal sollte unsere Reise starten—in 10 Tagen nach Spanien, auf dem polnischen Frachtdampfer Pomorzhe Zachodnie, welcher 16,000 Tonnen Sonnenblumenkerne geladen hatte. Mein

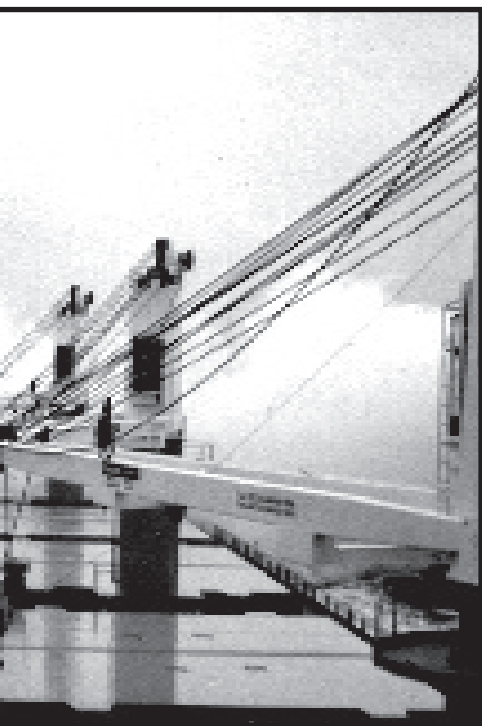
Partner Alyosha und ich hatten beschlossen, das Flugzeug zu vermeiden, um eine ökologischere Art des Reisens auszuprobieren. Für 35,75 US\$ pro Tag und Person erhielten wir drei warme vegetarische Mahlzeiten, eine grosse komfortable Kabine mit Dusche und durften Pool, Computer und andere angenehme Einrichtungen benutzen. Wir hatten viel Zeit zum Schachspielen, Lesen und gelegentlichen Plaudern mit den 15 Crewmitgliedern, wir beobachteten Wale, Delphine und Seeschildkröten oder hielten uns beim Kapitän auf der Brücke auf. Wir genossen die Langsamkeit, das Meer, den Himmel und die Ruhe auf dem 70 Meter langen Frachter, und selbst eine Sturmnacht überstanden wir gut. Gegen Ende der Fahrt fragten wir uns tatsächlich, warum Leute das Fliegen vorziehen. Mittlerweile liegt unsere Rückreise in die USA schon hinter uns. Wir stehen Euch gerne für Informationen zur Verfügung (siehe e-mail Adressen). Um eine Reise zu buchen, braucht es vor allem Geduld und ein wenig Spontaneität, denn Reisebüros bieten derlei Fahrten nicht an. Am einfachsten ist es, eine der Agenturen in Europa anzurufen, und sich nach den Auslaufterminen ihrer Frachtschiffe zu erkundigen sowie nach den Konditionen für Passagiere. Die Kontaktadressen am Ende des Textes können weiterhelfen. n



Nuestro viaje empezó en un puerto en Montreal: a bordo del carguero polaco Pomorzhe Zachodnie, que transportaba 16.000 toneladas de semillas de girasol a España. Mi compañero Alyosha y yo habíamos decidido evitar el

avión y probar un medio de transporte menos lesivo para el medio ambiente. Por 35,75\$ por persona y día recibimos tres ricas comidas vegetarianas, un camarote comfortable con ducha, pudimos usar la piscina, un ordenador y otros servicios. Dispusimos de tiempo para jugar al ajedrez, leer y charlar con los 15 tripulantes, observar ballenas, delfines y tortugas o pasar el tiempo con el capitán en el puente. Disfrutamos de la lenta travesía, el mar, el cielo y la tranquilidad en el barco de 170 metros, e incluso sobrevivimos a una noche tormentosa. Al final de nuestro viaje realmente nos preguntamos porqué algunas personas prefieren viajar en avión. En este momento ya hemos regresado a los Estados Unidos. Estamos a vuestra disposición para proporcionaros más información (ver vuestras direcciones de correo electrónico). Para reservar un viaje de este tipo necesitaréis paciencia y cierto desparpajo, porque no se tramitan a través de las agencias de viajes. La forma más sencilla es llamar a las agencias navieras en Europa y preguntar por las salidas de sus cargueros y las condiciones generales para pasajeros. La dirección al final del texto puede seros de utilidad. n

La traduction française est fournie dans un supplément inséré dans tous les magazines destinés aux pays francophones. Contactez Car Busters si vous voulez le recevoir dans un pays non-francophone.



The Wildlife

Our first evening on board, after watching the first of many glorious sunsets, we saw whales off to port, one fin whale, and four or five smaller ones that we couldn't identify, surfacing briefly and diving. On the winter trip we caught sight of an orca (killer whale) and a large group of whales surfacing almost like dolphins, travelling together through the storm. No matter how many photos you see, nothing can prepare you for the hugeness implied by the glimpse of a tail and a shoulder like that.

On a sunny summer day when we were nearing Europe, I was alone at the bow and saw two sea turtles within a couple of hours. Both had bright orange backs and flippers, and both were swimming in the same direction, until the ship interfered, tossing them a little off to the south.

The following morning, as we cut through a world of hazy sky and glassy sea, we finally saw dolphins, leaping and diving off starboard. I raced up to the bow past a cluster of men amused at my excitement and leaned over to watch. Soon one dolphin left the group to come darting and weaving and surfing on the ripple created by the prow of our ship. Then after a final leap, she banked away and rejoined her school. On the return trip I was again visited by a single dolphin who came to dance with the ship. For us their freedom and playful grace became a symbol of something to reach for in our lives, a way of being that we have largely forgotten about.

Why Fly?!

After our summer voyage on the PZ, Alyosha and I found ourselves so enormously pleased that we couldn't find many good arguments for flying any more. Our enthusiasm has been a bit subdued by the storms of our winter trip, but we're still planning to do our trans-Atlantic travelling this way in the future—as long as we don't have to travel in winter.

To give you some ideas how to do it yourself, first of all you will need lots of patience, persistence, and flexibility. Regular travel agents can't book you on one of these cheap cargo ships—you must do it yourself.

The most difficult thing about our trips was the uncertainty of our departure date and destination, which we didn't know for sure until the day before we embarked. Bad weather and loading difficulties can delay departure for several days. Besides, even with some of us eco-types starting to take ships, it's still a bit of an oddity for Polsteam staff and agents to encounter passengers, so be prepared for some disorganisation.

Still, if you can be flexible, it isn't that hard to get yourself on a Polsteam ship. First you should call about a month in advance to find out what vessels are travelling when. Generally they have at least two or three round-trip voyages a month between Europe and North America.

In summer, you can board or disembark at Montreal, Duluth (Minnesota), or a few other Canadian and U.S. cities in between. But remember, you pay by the day, and it takes several days to cross the Great Lakes on these ships.

In winter, the St. Lawrence River is closed, so cargo ships call at ports along the East Coast.

It's important to check with Polsteam and with the agent at the departure port whether a passenger cabin is free on the ship you want to take. Sometimes these cabins are called the owner's cabins, because they are typically reserved for the owner and owner's family.

Once you have found out when you need to be at the departure port, ask where the ship is calling on the other side of the ocean. If it calls at more than one port, you can theoretically stay on as long as you like and get off at the best place for you. The PZ took ten days to get from Quebec to Spain, and the Isa took 14 days to get from the Netherlands to the U.S.

It's quite informal. We had no tickets and no reservations, although for our return trip we had to get an e-mail from the Polsteam office in Szczecin confirming our permission to travel on the Isa. (I would also advise U.S. citizens attempting this trip from Montreal to get some kind of reservation-type document from Polsteam before arriving at the Canadian border.) Then we simply paid the ship captain, in cash, when we reached our destination. Other friends who travelled in the past year had to prove insurance and pay up-front before boarding. So be prepared.

It's good to be in close touch with the agent wherever you board, getting all their phone numbers, including mobile, if they have one.

Finally, pack all the toys, musical instruments, and good books you can fit—along with your sense of adventure!

An Appeal

The main reason we hitched a ride on a cargo ship was to avoid participating in air travel's environmental damage. But we have not yet found adequate information about the energy consumed by ship travel or the levels at which ships pollute water and air. Does anyone out there have info about long-distance ship travel vs. air travel, regarding efficiency and pollution?

Feel free to contact me via e-mail at <acewald@mindspring.com> or Alyosha at <alyosha@hotmail.com> if you want any more information, or if you just want help figuring out how to make your own cargo trip. n

Good luck and bon



As you know I have supported your enthusiasm for "Thursday" and the Car-Free Day movement since the moment you appeared on the screen. I like you folks and greatly appreciate your energy, enthusiasm and brains.

But I certainly don't want to see you or anyone else try to take over the entire movement. What we have here is a self-organising system. Our job at The Commons as much as anything else is to see to it that no one gets in the way of this healthy process. Thus we see Car Busters as one interesting current of activity in what must ultimately be a far greater and broader whole.

It took decades to make cities safe for cars, and reversing direction and making them safe and agreeable for people is a painstaking, long-term task that calls for good knowledge, dedication to the long term and an ability to understand that just because there are people out there who don't necessarily share our values as far as things like sustainability and community are concerned, it does not mean that they are jerks and subjects of derision.

There are at least 50 groups whose collaboration I value every bit as much as I do Car Busters'. But what's great about you is that today you are there, you have some ideas, you have some energy, and you are ready to do your part. That's terrific. Welcome aboard. Let's go to work.

The challenge is first one of really studying the terrain and then figuring out how to be really useful. We have a couple of currents out there already, and one thing that's clear is that we sure do need an anarcho-project such as you seem to be moving toward; the idea appeals to me greatly.

On the other hand (prissy schoolmarm here) I would be extremely disappointed if it helped set back a movement which is real, certainly imperfect, but nonetheless moving ahead. But how great it would be if your approach ended up being how you describe the idea: "radical, clever, polished, well thought-out, humorous, grassroots, splashy, hard-hitting..." And did I mention, well thought-out?

And now perhaps back to the discussions and exchanges that we hope are going to take place over the next weeks in the "@World Commentary" and other fora, the object of which is to put our heads together to decide what might be best and wisest to do next with this great idea. Stay tuned! n

Contact Eric Britton at Ecoplan, Le Frene, 8/10 rue Joseph Bara, 75006 Paris, France; tel: +(33) 1-4326-1323; fax +(33) 1-5301-2896; e-mail: <eric.britton@ecoplan.org>.



Bethbuster on the

Mesmorised by car magazines, terrorised by crossing the M32, up to her elbows in compost...

Since the last Car Busters I have put down my rucksack to stroke apple trees and weed the activist cafe's allotment in Bristol, England. Quite a different life than rural France.

Coming face to face with the magazine shelves in a news agent last week gave me a real shock: every way I looked, car magazines greeted my eyes. Auto weeklies for every day of the week, specialist 4WD, classic car, Formula 1 periodicals for every car brand in the showroom, used car listings for every "clapped out" Ford or Honda on the road...my eyes got wider as I counted the magazines, the final number reaching 26 different publications. Obviously the four stroke engine was a pet hobby of this news agent; your average news shop would have about five car magazines, but to discover that this many exist in the U.K. is sobering.

Leafing through some of them was incredibly monotonous, unless you too salivate copiously over the latest Mercedes or are excited by "fun, sporty little numbers." Readers write in to sing praises of car models, rant about others (such as the Volvo whose bin did not have a rubber rim, a design feature which could apparently cause a serious accident!) Car safety is a favourite with the readers, from countless tyre tests to arguing about young drivers and motorbikes.

Predictably the issues you find as you excitedly peruse your seasonal Car Busters are not even glanced at by these rags. The founder of the Motoring Association asks us: "The alternative to the car. Do you remember them? The tatty trains, buses and aeroplanes [interest-

ing one] that 'New Labour' is trying to shoehorn us into" and declares that public transport is as unfeasible as communism.

I would like to invite these magazines' followers to join me on my typical day's journey, which invariably entails crossing the M32, a bloody gash which tears Bristol in two. I can cross using the underpass—a circular series of piss-soaked, dark dank tunnels—or the overpass. Both are mugging hotspots. The soot-blackened walls and boarded-up houses are a poignant reminder of how big roads (six lanes in this case) kill your neighbourhood.

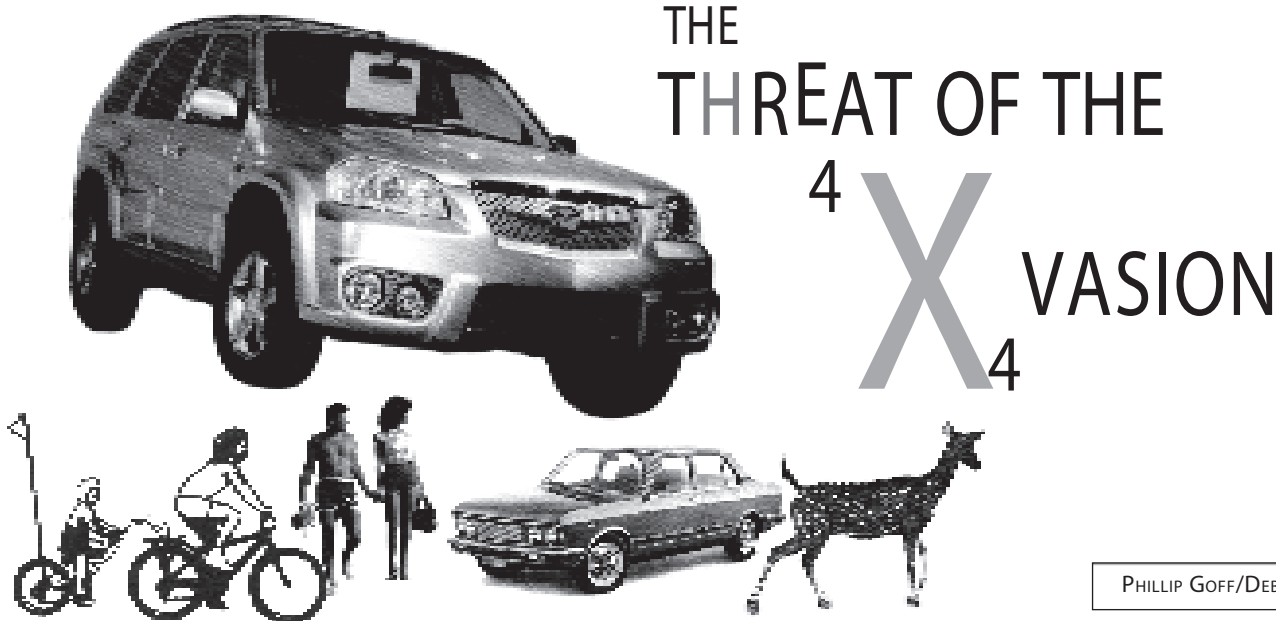
Returning to a big city is undeniably hazardous to your health. I have had chest infections since arriving in Bristol four months ago, a cough which intensifies each time I must

cross the M32.

What am I doing to fight back? Having a break from campaigning on what makes the city grey and concentrating on making the city greener! We are planting two orchards in different parts of Bristol, a willow plantation, setting up tree nurseries and scheming how to turn wasteland into edible landscapes with our "Eat the Street" project.

You will be relieved to hear that not all Bristol's activists are up to their elbows in compost. A clandestine team of subverters roam the city, giving nasty adverts a much-needed makeover. A Mazda billboard displaying the heart-shaped company logo received a "Have a heart, burn your car." n

- Bethan Stagg



PHILLIP GOFF/DEBBIE WATERS

The modern-day Dinosaur, ripping through the countryside with a body far larger than the driver's brain, spouting three to five times more pollution than the average car-beast and capable of killing at just 16 kilometres per hour...

Unlike the dinosaurs, the sport-utility vehicle, or SUV, is not extinct. The Explorer, Land Rover, Pathfinder, Expedition—these vehicles just want to get around. And having cornered 50 percent of the new car market in America, they are speeding to Europe.

**"If Nature Had a CEO,
This Would Be
the Company Car..."**

[Toyota advert]

Join the ranks of ranchers, farmers, and suburbanite "cowboys" battling the speed bumps on the rough ride home. It's all so easy, buy an SUV and you too can enjoy the control, power, and dominance of the corporate elite. Only, like some of our favourite CEOs, the SUV is difficult to handle, unbalanced and destructive.

The SUV's great height, size and weight make the possibility of avoiding accidents by means of effective braking, balance handling, and quick, responsive steering appalling. Brake hard, if you

like, but the average stopping distance of an SUV travelling at 95 kilometres per hour is nearly seven metres more than for a car. Try to swerve and avoid that collision and the SUV is so unstable it will just as easily tip over.

And if the dangers to you as a driver aren't enough, consider what the SUV can do to another road user or pedestrian. In collisions between SUVs and cars, the car driver is 10 to 13 times more likely to be killed.

Got a fashionable bull bar fitted on the front? Well, you won't be able to drive your SUV in Jersey or parts of urban Australia. Bull bars, cage-like structures on the front of the vehicle designed in Australia to protect the car/driver when crashing into a kangaroo or other large animal, have been banned there.

Designed to bounce a large animal off the front of a vehicle and away from the driver, these bull bars can toss a pedestrian up into the air and send them crashing to the ground, to get run over by the same vehicle that just hit them or another just passing by. Not that you have to drive fast to maim or kill if you have bull bars; they tend to be fitted at the hip-height of an adult and head height of a small child. Hip injuries, especially for the elderly, are very painful and difficult to heal. And the concentrated impact of steel bars in the head can kill a child at speeds as low as 16 kilometres per hour.

Other road users, pedestrians and cyclists are not the SUV's only victims. In 1975 shortages of petrol, rising prices and growing queues at petrol stations panicked the American government into introducing fuel efficiency standards for cars, to help America kick its

dirty foreign oil import habit. SUVs were exempted, not because they're big and sexy, but to avoid disadvantaging farmers.

Legally classified as "light trucks," they have only to perform 33.3 kilometres per gallon, compared to the passenger car's 44.2.

Light truck emissions represent the single fastest growing source of global warming gases. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates 34 percent of the total increase of expected energy-related carbon dioxide emissions from 1990 to 2010, as they release 19 pounds of carbon dioxide per gallon of gasoline.

A recent presidential decree declared SUVs be classified as passenger cars, so maybe this can begin to rectify the situation.

**"Why Just Own the Road When
You Can
Own the Planet?"**

[Nissan advert]

The Detroit motor show saw the unveiling of bigger, better, faster, sexier SUVs for the American market. DaimlerChrysler brought out a "Chrysler PT Cruiser" which Fortune magazine quiveringly described as "a car-based category defier with the flexibility of a minivan but the profile of a hot-rodded London taxi cab."

So large they don't fit in the garage, most of the new SUVs have the horsepower and fuel consumption of a municipal bus (the Ford Excursion has a 7.3-litre engine).

We can expect some of the same in Europe—Ford, Mercedes and BMW are all about to launch SUVs for the

European market. These vehicles are more stylish and fuel-efficient than their American counterparts, but are nevertheless far larger than the average car now available.

As Jacques Nasser, Ford's CEO, said, "We are developing SUVs for every type of customer and we're not slowing down."

"Every type of customer" should not include the environmentally aware, though try telling that to Adam Markham, director of the Climate Change Program at World Wildlife Fund (USA), who drives a jeep Cherokee. But he has to, he lives "a half-mile trek up in the country."

The SUV invasion threatens a recent European climate change directive. The European Union asked Europe's motor manufacturers, as represented by the European Automobile Manufacturers Association (ACEA), to agree to a voluntary reduction in carbon dioxide emissions from motor vehicles to 120 grams per kilometre by the year 2005. A compromise was agreed at a reduction rate of 140 g/km by the year 2008. But a limit of 140g/km is unlikely to have much effect on the threat of global warming, certainly not if accompanied by an increase in the number of cars on our roads.

What will certainly ruin its chances, however, is the impact of car advertising. As the European Federation for

Transport and Environment noted in a recent study: "Manufacturers have successfully linked comfort and power—for a given model, the more comfort the buyer wants, the more power he/she is obliged to buy."

There is a consumer demand for vehicles that require more fuel, as they offer the greater comfort and perception of safety that the consumer seeks. Comfort does not come without powerful, gas-guzzling, "high-pollutin'" engines. So the customer gets what the customer wants, or is told to want, and damn the consequences.

The voluntary agreement between the E.U. and ACEA on vehicle emissions reduction "covers only passenger cars classified as M1 in Council Directive 93/116 EEC. Light commercial vehicles are exempt. In Portugal, Spain and other E.U. nations, SUVs are classed as commercial vehicles—so the motor manufacturers have won the very same exemption in Europe that has allowed them to pollute the U.S. for decades. n

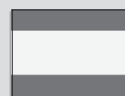
TRANSLATION

Traduction • Traducción • Übersetzung



Dieser Artikel beschäftigt sich mit der wachsenden Anzahl sogenannter Sport Utility Vehicles (SUVs) in den USA und ihrer drohenden Invasion in Europa. Durch erfolgreiche Anzeigekampagnen bezüglich ihrer Sicherheit, des Komforts und Power

in jedem Terrain haben SUVs, eine Weiterentwicklung der Jeeps, 50% des amerikanischen Marktes für neue Autos monopolisiert. Eine Nissan Anzeige lässt verlauten: "Warum nur die Strasse besitzen wenn Sie den Planet besitzen können?" SUVs haben keineswegs viel Sicherheit aufzuweisen, und nimmt man dazu noch die sogenannten 'bull bars' (käföghnliche Konstruktionen an der Stossstange, welche in Australien entwickelt wurden, um den Fahrer und das Auto beim Zusammenstoss mit Kängurus zu schützen) können sie ein Kind bei nur 16 km/h töten. In den USA sind SUVs seit den Siebziger Jahren von Kontrollen des Benzinverbrauches befreit, und so verschmutzen sie weiter fröhlich vor sich hin. Ein präsidentialer Erlass will dies nun ändern. Ford, BMW und Mercedes wollen derzeit SUVs auf den europäischen Markt bringen. Die Invasion der SUVs würde eine Direktive der EU bedrohen, nach welcher der Treibhauseffekt durch die verminderten Kohlendioxidausstösse von Autos zu bekämpfen sei. Die Werbekampagnen für SUVs haben die Idee des Komforts erfolgreich mit Macht verbunden und kreieren so eine Nachfrage nach kraftvollen Fahrzeugen. Europäische Autohersteller haben zwar der EU-Direktive freiwillig zugestimmt, jedoch nur bezüglich der Abgase von Privatwagen. Kleine Geschäftswagen, als welche SUVs in vielen EU-Ländern angesehen werden, fallen nicht unter diese Auflagen. Somit hat Europa gerade die selbe Ausnahme entwickelt, welche den SUVs seit Jahrzehnten erlaubt, Amerika zu verschmutzen; und trotzdem werden die Käufer Schlange stehen.



Este artículo trata sobre el espectacular incremento de los vehículos todoterreno en los Estados Unidos y la amenaza de invasión que suponen para Europa. Los vehículos todoterreno han copado el 50% del mercado de coches nuevos en EE.UU empleando una exitosa publicidad

basada en su seguridad, confort y su potencia fuera del asfalto. Un conocido anuncio de Nissan pregunta ¿Porqué conformarse con conducir por carretera si puedes conducir por todo el planeta? Sin embargo, los todoterreno tienen unas estadísticas de seguridad terroríficas, y con la adición de las "bull bars" (estructuras en forma de jaula, diseñadas en Australia para proteger al conductor/vehículo de los choques con canguros) pueden matar a un niño a 16km/h. En EE.UU los todoterreno han estado exentos de controles sobre niveles de consumo de combustible desde los años 70. Ahora, un Decreto Presidencial promete cambiar esta situación. Ford, BMW y Mercedes están a punto de lanzar todoterrenos destinados al mercado europeo. La invasión de los todo-terreno constituye una amenaza para una Directiva de la UE reciente que pretende combatir el calentamiento global reduciendo las emisiones de CO₂ procedentes de los vehículos, ya que la publicidad de los todoterreno ha conseguido unir el concepto de confort con el de potencia, generando una demanda de vehículos de gran potencia. Tras una serie de negociaciones, la industria europea del automóvil accedió voluntariamente a la reducción de las emisiones de CO₂, pero solamente de los turismos. Los vehículos comerciales ligeros quedaron exentos de la reducción de emisiones y en varios de los países de la UE los todo-terreno están catalogados como vehículos comerciales. Es decir, la UE acaba de garantizar el mismo tipo de exención que permitió a los todoterreno contaminar EE.UU durante décadas, y los consumidores querrán comprarlos.

ROADKILL BILL



by KEN AUIDOR



Studies & Reports

Rapports • Berichte • Reportes



You don't need a PhD to find out what the PhDs are doing. Car Busters guarantees 100% non-academic language in this section—or your money back.



photo: Robert Doisneau, Place de la Concorde, 1969

Walkers and Cyclists: Endangered Species

One third of those killed on Britain's roads are cyclists and walkers, more than twice the percentage in France and higher than the overall European average of less than one quarter.

The risk of being killed is more than four times higher for cyclists and pedestrians than it is for car occupants. A report by the European Transport Safety Council shows that 1,247 of Britain's 3,740 road deaths in 1996 were cyclists or pedestrians, although Britons cycle less than most of their continental counter-parts. In large cities, this group accounts for half of all road deaths. The high death toll especially within the 10 to 14-year-old age group is alarming.

"This report shows clearly that the modern traffic system is designed from a car user's perspective and the limitations of that approach," commented Rob Gifford, executive director of the Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety. "We need to reshape that view, allowing more vulnerable road-users to take centre stage. In residential areas, the car must become a guest, losing its place as the king."

Britain's poor record comes as non-motorist groups complain that they are being "ghettoised" by councils who force them to share brideways, footpaths and canal tow-paths rather than create cycle lanes on roads or pedestrian areas.

Peter Lewis of the London Cycling Campaign, said that other countries had achieved a "critical mass" of cyclists, which was crucial in improving safety. "When a motorist sees a cyclist every minute, it starts to have a real effect on the level of safety. But cyclists have to be given confidence, through training and facilities, to go on the road. The key is that the place for cycling is the road and people should not be frightened off."

Pedestrian Zones:

A How-to Guide

The Victoria Transport Policy Institute has issued guidelines for creating pedestrianised commercial districts ("Mainstreets"), which if followed might help in the process of transforming cities into places suitable for living.

The proposed guidelines include:

- Pedestrian commercial streets should form a natural connection route for diverse attractions (tourist activities, shops, offices, etc.), and serve as both a destination and a thoroughfare.

- Develop a pleasant environment, with greenery, shade and rain covers. Street-level building features and street furniture should be pedestrian scale and attractive. Avoid blank walls on buildings.

- Develop a variety of pedestrian-oriented retail shops and services that attract a broad range of customers/clients.

- Allow motor vehicles as required for access, with appropriate restrictions based on need, time and vehicle type.

- Pedestrian streets should have good access to public transit and parking, and be located in a pedestrian-friendly area.

- Security, cleanliness and physical maintenance standards must be high.

- Provide a range of artistic, cultural and recreational amenities (statues, fountains, playgrounds) and activities (concerts, fairs, markets). Highlight historical features.

- Pedestrian streets should generally be small and short, typically just a few blocks in length.

- Vehicle traffic on cross-streets should be slowed or restricted.

The full version of "Pedestrian and Bicycle Planning: Guide to Best Practices" is available at <www.vtpi.org>. Todd Litman, the author, would appreciate comments: VTPI, 1250 Rudlin Street, Victoria, BC, V8V 3R7, Canada, <litman@vtpi.org>.

Traffic Causes

Childhood Cancer

A new study conducted in Denver, USA, shows that children living near heavily travelled streets or highways are at greater risk of developing cancer, including childhood leukemia.

The study showed that homes adjacent to street corridors (up to 1,500 feet away) carrying 20,000 or more vehicles per day had roughly a six-fold increase in risk for children contracting cancer. Motor vehicles are a significant source of benzene emissions, a known cause of leukemia in adults. The authors of the study speculated that children living near heavily trafficked streets could be exposed to benzene and other carcinogens not only via inhalation but also exposure to soil where vehicle emission chemicals may be deposited.

When researchers looked at the occurrence of cancer in children living in homes close to both high-traffic corridors and high-current power lines, they found the cancer risks were even greater. However, they still do not know why.

- Journal of the Air and Waste Management Association

An End to Car-Based Housing Development?

Delivering a less car-reliant environment in general, and not just for one day, is quite possible provided that developments are planned along appropriate sustainable principles, according to a new report commissioned by the London Planning Advisory Committee.

The work by consultant Llewelyn Davies builds on LPAC's previous studies of developing smaller high-density housing areas with a low emphasis on parking and car accessibility. The report claims that London's housing need could be met by developing large higher-density housing schemes with good transport links, which put the needs of people before cars.

The report contains 24 case studies of design-led development options based on generic London housing styles, challenging conventional car-based layouts and parking standards. To promote sustainable development, the report promotes permeability—the idea of good walking networks linking buildings, instead of the motor-led concept based around a minimum number of connections with the outside world. Public transport stations or stops, either within or beside the development, should again be accessed via direct and safe walking or cycle routes, it says.

- Local Transport Today

"Sustainable Residential Quality: Exploring the Housing Potential of Large Sites" is available at £46 from Adrian Dady at LPAC; tel: 020-7222-2244 ext. 214; e-mail: <orders@lpac.gov.uk>.



OUR RIGHT TO DRIVE!

BY SAM TRACY

It was becoming a gorgeous day. In the years that she'd been a bike courier, Jesse had honed down a sharp sense of just what that meant.

he was headed back in to town from nine miles out, after a well-paid long-distance run to the Stokes family farm, the cash stashed in her bag. Added to the gravy that came with her medical route, she'd probably afford an extra day off the next week.

Rolling back towards town, she came across some kids

clowning around in a truck. This was a big black Ford Expedition she'd noticed on the way out, abandoned right in the middle of the intersection. Positioned the way it was, almost ready to pounce, the sight was a little creepy, reminiscent of the bad old days.

It had probably been stripped and carved out years ago—SUVs had been what the fancy people drove, they usually came with good pickings, just natural targets.

But that would have happened years ago. She couldn't understand why these kids found it so interesting. The biggest one couldn't have been more than 10 or 12 years old.

She rolled in for a look. One of the smaller boys noticed her first. He was standing in the driver's seat. He looked a bit like

a hamster.

"Wow, lady, cool bike! Is that really a Croll?"

"The one and only. Built by the master himself. What are you kids doing? Isn't this thing all carved out already?"

The biggest boy answered from the passenger seat. "We're driving! We're using our right to drive!"

"Yeah," hamster boy chimed in. "And you better look out, we're going really fast!"

Wow. Some people's kids. "What do you mean, driving? Why do you want to drive?"

Hamster boy giggled. "We have a right to drive! Because we're free now! Here, look!"

He held out an old glossy-style magazine with a truck on the cover. It was called *Car and Driver*. The cover story was something called "Our Right to Drive." The date in the corner traced it back to just before the first Congressional hearings about the cars.

"Hey, this is pretty old. Where did you find this?"

"We found it in the trunk in back!" Hamster boy burst out laughing again. "No, I'm just kidding, we traded our friends for it. So now we're learning our right to drive!"

This was wild. Here were these kids, pretending to drive. The oil wars had been history before they were born.

"Your rights to drive, huh? That's great! What are you putting in the gas tank, little white mice?"

"No, we have the fuel cell! It's really fast. Look, here's a picture!" He flipped excitedly through his magazine, stopping at a story on fuel cells for cars.

"Wow, an Expedition with a fuel cell! You must be really rich, huh?"

Nobody but the rich could afford that shit when they'd come out with it. But everybody still had to be to work on time,

and that was when things had started to change.

The Expedition's design leaders, real slimy bastards, had been in the group that had gone to trial the year of the first official Non-Winter, and the folks in the central bioregion had been more or less free to build their living rooms out-doors ever since. Florida hadn't been so lucky. Some people still wore their faded yellow "Remember Florida" t-shirts.

"Yeah, we're rich alright," the passenger advised. "My driver is taking me to Las Vegas. So I can gamble with all my money."

"Cool! That's great! Wish I could go, but I have to do my route. Las Vegas is pretty far to go. I hope none of the bridges are washed out!"

The passenger was ready with his answer. "That's why we're in our Ford Expedition. It's a rugged vehicle. It goes off-road and everything!"

"I guess you guys have thought of everything! But you know...back when there were cars with chauffeurs and stuff, the important people used to sit in the back seat."

"Really?"

"Yeah!" cried another kid from the back. "I want to sit up front by the windshield!"

"I bet we're a lot faster than you, even with your Croll!" Hamster boy cheered.

"I bet you are. But I have to go do my route, so good luck with the trip!"

Jesse clipped in and started rolling down the road.

"You don't wanna play driving?" someone called after her. "You never played driver?"

"No, I never did," Jesse chuckled at the thought. "It was cowboys and Indians back then. 'See ya!'"



"A WILD SCENARIO OF THE FUTURE"

Resources

Ressources • Materialien • Recursos



The all-new Car Busters spring season line of très chic mail order items will make you the best looking (okay, best resourced) activist on the streets.

Three Books from Wolfgang Zuckermann



The illustrated children's book "Family Mouse Behind the Wheel" by Wolfgang Zuckermann teaches children at a young age the problems of car culture, with a healthy dose of anthropomorphism and a smattering of English text.

Zuckermann's classic "The End of the Road: From World Car Crisis to Sustainable Transportation," however, requires one's full attention, being 300 pages of solid information analysing today's predicament and offering a range of solutions to end the auto-age.



Then there's Zuckermann's newly published "Alice in Wonderland"—"a curious mixture of non-sense, social satire and surrealist fairy tale, which takes the classical Alice through the dreary landscape of suburban America." Very entertaining and insightful. In the spirit of the original Alice, with its rhymes, puns and assorted odd characters. Also 20 Ecos.

Wise Fool Basics



Giant puppet building, puppet masks, tips and tricks for street theatre, how to build stilts, lanterns. This fantastic book by K. Ruby of Wise Fool Puppet Intervention is full of useful information for making actions eye-catching, imaginative and

endlessly creative.

North Americans should order the book directly from Wise Fool, 2633 Etna Street, Berkeley CA 94709, priced on a sliding scale from US\$7 to \$15, plus \$2 postage.



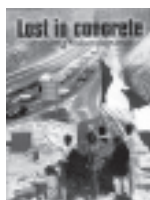
Direkte Aktionen oder Die kleine Blockadefibel

Das Beste aus dem berühmten-berühmten Buch Road Raging: Top Tips for Wrecking Road-building. Hilfreiches für Protest-camps, Strassenparties,

Kran-blockaden, Car Walking, Subvertising, Informationen zu Rechtlichem und Gruppenprozessen, plus viele hilfreiche Bilder und Fotos.

Lost in Concrete

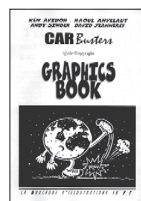
"Lost in Concrete: An Activist Guide to European Transport Policies" gives you a thorough look at the Trans-European Networks road schemes. It contains TENs history, who's lobbying for them, their potential effects on health, culture, jobs and regional economies, their alternatives. It also includes lots of general transport information, such as facts on air pollution, climate change and time pollution.



Graphics Booklet / Brochure de Dessins

This 44-page graphics booklet brings together all the best transport-related graphics on file at Car Busters, including information on how to produce attractive posters and fliers. They can be reproduced freely (for non-profit purposes) by local groups for their leaflets, posters, agit-prop, etc.

Specify English or French version; 10 Ecos (add 2 Ecos postage outside Europe).



Direct Action Manual

Back in print. Edited by a former Earth First! Journal co-editor, it's a 152-page almost comprehensive guide to direct action tactics developed around the world. Lots of useful diagrams and illustrations.



Detour Catalogue

The Detour Catalogue of Transportation and Urban Ecology contains over 60 books and other resources available by mail order from Detour's Toronto office; or skip the catalogue and look at <www.web.net/~detour>.



The Art and Science of Billboard Improvement

Brought to you by the "Billboard Liberation Front and Friends," this nifty 12-page booklet gives you all the practical details for altering car ads and advertising billboards to say something a little more socially responsible.



Not finding what you need for your campaign?

Let us know, and we'll try to track it down and include it here.

"Towards Car-Free Cities I"

Conference Proceedings

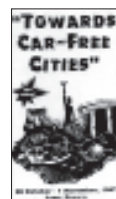
These 40-page proceedings are both an account of the international gathering that launched Car Busters and a manual for anyone planning a similar event—everything from running a tripod workshop to conference logistics.

Available free by e-mail (Word 6.0 attachment) or 7 Ecos by post.

Lyon Conference Video

This 36-minute video documents the work and actions of the first "Towards Car-Free Cities" conference. Use it to introduce others to the issue or to inspire those already involved.

Note: It's in the European "PAL" format.



La Liberté de Circuler

Publié en 1991 par Colin Ward sous le titre "Freedom to Go: After the Motor Age", ce livre explore la question de la "libre circulation" dans une perspective éco-anarchiste. Cette version française, sous-titrée "Pour en finir avec le mythe de l'auto-mobile", a été publiée à Lyon en 1993.



Casseurs de Pub

C'est le premier numéro de la version francophone-indépendante du magazine canadien Adbusters, attaquant non seulement la culture automobile mais aussi des grands surfaces, les fast foods, la sur-consommation, le capitalisme et la vie quotidienne. Le tout dans un format graphique très professionnel. 7.5 Ecos.



Issue n°2: Reclaim the Streets goes global • Oil crisis to trigger car-free planet • Lobbying your city council • First car-walking, now "car biking" • How to cure a car addict

THE "ECO" SYSTEM

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Austria	7 Schillings	170 Schillings
Australia	1.2 Dollars	29 Dollars
Belgium	21 Francs	500 Francs
Belarus	28,700 Rubels	700,000 Rubels
Bulgaria	0.22 Leva	5.3 Leva
Canada	0.8 Dollars	19.20 Dollars
Croatia	1.1 Kuna	27 Kuna
Czech Rep.	6.5 Koren	156 Koren
Denmark	3.8 Kroner	92 Kroner
Estonia	3.6 Kroons	87 Kroons
Finland	3 Marks	72 Marks
France	3.4 Francs	82 Francs
Germany	1 Mark	24 Marks
Greece	160 Drachme	3,850 Drachme
Hungary	42 Forint	1,000 Forint
Ireland	0.36 Pounds	9 Pounds
Italy	1,000 Lira	24,000 Lira
Latvia	0.11 Lats	2.7 Lats
Lithuania	0.42 Litass	10 Litass
Luxembourg	21 Francs	500 Francs
Macedonia	9.5 Denar	228 Denar
Malta	0.17 Lira	4 Lira
Netherlands	1.1 Guilders	27 Guilders
Norway	4.16 Kroner	100 Kroner
Poland	1 Zloty	24 Zloty
Portugal	71.8 Escudos	1,700 Escudos
Romania	1,910 Lei	46,000 Lei
Russia	2.2 Rubels	52 Rubels
Slovakia	6.5 Koren	155 Koren
Slovenia	52 Tolar	1,250 Tolar
Spain	70.6 Pesetas	1,700 Pesetas
Sweden	4.5 Kroner	110 Kroner
Switzerland	0.9 Francs	22 Francs
Turkey	127,000 Lira	3,000,000 Lira
Ukraine	0.4 Hryvnya	10 Hryvnya
U.K.	0.32 Pounds	8 Pounds
USA	0.7 Dollars	17.5 Dollars
Yugoslavia	1 Dinar	24 Dinar



Stickers for Selfishly Parked Cars

Fight back against cars parked on pavements (sidewalks). Stick these mini-stickers on obstructing cars to remind the owners that pavements are for people, not parking.

2 Ecos for 25 stickers.



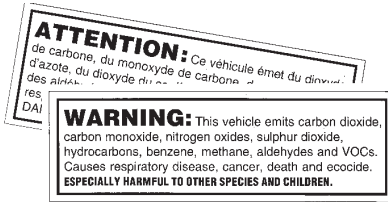
Stop-Sign Improvement

Forty-six centimetres long. Bright red. One word: "DRIVING." These big glossy stickers are just the right size to go under the word "STOP" on stop signs. You can see them all over in the streets of Berkeley, California. Why not your town, too?

1 Eco each.

Need a MATE?

This new map produced by A SEED Europe provides a detailed overview of transport projects and campaigns. Includes 60-page booklet with addresses and more. Contact Car Busters for



Car "Cancer" Stickers

Big, hard-to-remove "cancer warning" stickers for cars. Available in French, German, English or Spanish. 10 Ecos for 25.



"One Less Car" Bike Stickers

The famous One Less Car sticker has just become multilingual. To explain to drivers that your bike is not a part of the traffic problem, we now have One Less Car in Norwegian/Swedish/Danish, Serbian/Croatian, Romanian and Polish, as well as French, German, Spanish and English. More languages coming soon. The stickers are also water-resistant (more so than the last print run).

5 Ecos for 5, 15 Ecos for 25. Specify language, obviously. Please help distribute these stickers—feel free to re-sell them through your group or infoshop.

Gift Subscriptions

Want to give a Car Busters subscription as a gift to a friend? Just send along the name and address of the gift recipient, and Car Busters will send a card in your name along with the first issue sent. Regular subscription rates apply.

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Issue n°3: France's first day without cars • Capitalism, fascism, car culture • Moscow public transport sickens • Y2K • DIY bike lanes • Make your own cardboard car



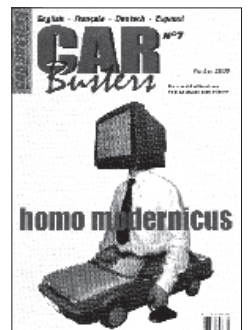
Issue n°4: Direct action gets imaginative • Sex, lies and advertising • Traffic generation and evaporation • Road building puts Slovakia in debt • Shell in Nigeria



Issue n°5: Industry's response to global warming • Why air traffic keeps growing and growing • Exxon Valdez ten years later • Car-free rhetoric vs. reality



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CAR BUSTERS AIMS TO BUILD AND MAINTAIN THE INTERNATIONAL CAR-FREE MOVEMENT. THE MAGAZINE IS PUBLISHED QUARTERLY TO FACILITATE EXCHANGE AND COOPERATION AMONG ACTIVISTS AND CAMPAIGNERS, REACH OUT TO A WIDER PUBLIC, INSPIRE NEW ACTIVISTS AND CHANGE THE WORLD.

Please join us by spreading the word, distributing the magazine, contributing articles, reports, graphics, photos, and, of course, subscribing. But if you're busy or can't...hey, we understand!

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* see page 29 to find the cost of a subscription—24 Ecos—in your country's currency.

Car Busters accepts cheques in US\$, FF, GB£ and Kc; bank or postal transfers; and cash in DM, NLG, US\$, FF, GB£ and Kc (to reduce our exchange costs). No Eurocheques, please.

Europeans and others:
ä Krátká 26, 100 00, Praha 10, Czech Republic

North Americans:
ä P.O. Box 170051, San Francisco, CA, 94117, USA

Announcements

Annonces • Anzeigen • Anuncios



Have something to announce? Send it in by the next deadline. Believe it or not, it will cost you nothing.

Anti-Car Artists On-Line

Car Busters artist Ken Avidor now has a web site up and running for his weekly comic strip, Roadkill Bill. Despite being a self-proclaimed Luddite, Avidor will update the <www.roadkillbill.com> site once a month. Artist Andy Singer's work can be found at <www.andysinger.com>. Some of Raoul Anvélaüt's work is featured at <www.antipub.net>. David J. remains a humble and increasingly lonely hold-out to this senseless electronisation of art.

World Transport Journal Goes Electronic-Only

Volume 5, no. 4 of World Transport Policy & Practice was the last print edition of this journal. From now on it will be electronic only—Adobe Acrobat PDF files—but free. A recent issue on car sharing is down-loadable from <www.ecoplan.org/wtpp>.

For more info, send a message to John Whitelegg at: <ecologic@gn.apc.org>.

TV Turn-Off Week

A handful of megacorporations now control most of the global information flows and routinely censor opinions that challenge their interests and profitability. What are we going to do about it? TV Turnoff Week, April 22 to 28, is a start. Millions leaving their screens blank for a week is a powerful gesture of consumer sovereignty and will lead to bigger things down the road. If you are planning an action, check out <www.adbusters.org> for ideas and posters.

Action Trip to Pyrenees

On March 15, ten environmental activists from La Goutte d'Eau, an activists' centre in the Vallée d'Aspe in the French Pyrenees, started a hunger strike. Why? A judge ruled that the motorway construction of the E7 route near Bedous can continue. Now there's an immediate threat of eviction of La Goutte d'Eau. Rumours circulate that it will happen April 20.

Come on May 7 to a big demonstration in Bedous. The local activists need support from abroad. Two bus trips will be organised from the Netherlands. The second bus will go afterward to Itoiz in nearby Basque Country, where a dam being built will flood a large nature area and seven villages. So, if you want to do some direct action and enjoy the nature and scenery at the same time, e-mail <flip@casema.net> or call +(31) 6-2337-2346 for more information. La Goutte d'Eau: +(33) 5-59-34-53-18.

Flying from One Campaign to Another

A new European campaign was launched the week of February 7. The "Green Skies" campaign takes over from the "Right Price for Air Travel" campaign in working to reduce the environmental problems caused by aviation. The Right Price campaign has come to an end, with participants from all over Europe expressing themselves generally happy with its outcome, and wanting to continue the work of the campaign.

The Green Skies campaign will be coordinated by the Aviation Environment Federation: <AEFed@compuserve.com>.

Bike Summer 2000

This urban and eco-activist gathering in Chicago kicks off with the July 28 Critical Mass bike ride, and continues with a series of events throughout August.

Conceived after the phenomenal success of Bike Summer '99 in San Francisco, the event will draw activists from around the world. It aims to create an environment in which they can discuss solutions, make new alliances, and celebrate the bicycle and the culture that has formed around it.

Anybody willing to organise their own bike and (un)related events for the calendar is still welcome. Also needed are folks to distribute posters and stickers, forward outreach letters, organise group trips, and submit articles for the 'zine.

More info: <www.bikesummer.org> or tel: +1(773) 342-2058.

CarFree, CarLess and Careless: A Correction

The "CarLess" listserve mentioned in Car Busters #7 is actually called "CarFree." So, the e-mail address to subscribe is <CarFree-subscribe@onelist.com>.

The <www.onelist.com> search mechanism is a little buggy. It can't find "carfree" at all. But if you do a search for "careless" it will match this: "a support group for parents who have lost their child to senseless acts of reckless horseplay such as death caused by careless [sic] handling of guns, caused by the careless and insensitive drivers, etc."

I can't tell whether the victims of drive-by shootings qualify for this support group.

- Jym Dyer, San Francisco

Car-Free Postcards

The website <www.carfree.com> now carries scans of about 250 postcards of street scenes, mostly between 1897 and 1914. Cars are visible in only a very few of the images. These cards show how attractive streets were before they were rearranged for the convenience of drivers and overrun by cars.

Prague Resistance 2000

Join the campaign against IMF/World Bank summit in Prague, September 25

to 28. The Initiative Against Economic Globalisation—Prague 2000 needs your support for the continuing struggle for global justice.

Some 20,000 representatives of global capital are expected to come to Prague to attend the 55th annual summit of the IMF and the World Bank. This prestigious meeting of the world economic elite, the first of its kind in the Central and Eastern Europe, will be of a great importance. The delegates will meet to propose a scheme of further liberalisation of the world economy by defining new loan priorities and structural adjustment conditions.

A series of campaigns has been planned that will culminate in ten days of activities starting on September 20. Non-violent demonstrations, info campaigns, and a Festival of Art and Resistance including a counter-summit will be the main activities. All kinds (both moral and material) of support are needed from all over the world.

If you want more information on the actions in Prague and accommodation facilities, or on INPEG and the Czech resistance movement, visit the web pages <<http://imf2000.webjump.com>> or e-mail: <ouremailPrague2000_cz@hotmail.com>.

Upcoming Conferences

• Velo Mondial 2000, the world bicycle conference, June 18-22, Amsterdam. The relevance of cycling for transport, land-use planning, health, economy and environment will be discussed, with input from all regions of the world, and from all stakeholders of cycling. All information can be found on the web site <www.velomondial2000.nl>, which includes an on-line registration form. Otherwise: tel: +(31) 30-2918110; e-mail: <vm2000.fbenfb@pzn.nl>.

• Reinventing Mobility: Challenge of the 21st Century, June 24-27, Bremen, Germany. Organised by Bremen Initiative, a global campaign for business-municipality partnership towards a sustainable future for cities. Contact: Ecology and Communication, Leher Heerstr. 102, D-28359 Bremen; tel: +(49)421-23-00-11-0; <conference2000@bremen-initiative.de>; web: <www.bremen-initiative.de>.

• ProBike/ProWalk 2000: An 11th International Conference on Bicycling and Walking, Sept. 5-9, Philadelphia, USA. For more information contact: The National Center for Bicycling and Walking, Bill Wilkinson or Peter Moe, 1506 21st Street NW #200, Washington, DC, 20036 e-mail: <bikefed@aol.com>; web: <www.bikefed.org>.



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